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A SERIES OF MANUALS FOR CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND STUDENTS

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NON-CATHOLIC DENOMINATIONS

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BY THE

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EDITORS' PREFACE.

THIS series of Handbooks is designed to meet a need, which, the Editors believe, has been widely felt, and which results in great measure from the predominant importance attached to Dogmatic and Moral Theology in the studies preliminary to the Priesthood. That the first place must of necessity be given to these subjects will not be disputed. But there remains a large outlying field of professional knowledge which is always in danger of being crowded out in the years before ordination, and the practical utility of which may not be fully realised until some experience of the ministry has been gained. It will be the aim of the present series to offer the sort of help which is dictated by such experience, and its developments will be largely guided by the suggestions, past and future, of the Clergy themselves. To provide Textbooks for Dogmatic Treatises is not contemplated—at any rate not at the outset. On the other hand, the pastoral work of the missionary priest will be kept constantly in view, and the series will also deal with those historical and liturgical aspects of Catholic

belief and practice which are every day being brought more into prominence.

That the needs of English-speaking countries are, in these respects, exceptional, must be manifest to all. In point of treatment it seems desirable that the volumes should be popular rather than scholastic, but the Editors hope that by the selection of writers, fully competent in their special subjects, the information given may always be accurate and abreast of modern research.

The kind approval of this scheme by His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster, in whose Diocese these manuals are edited, has suggested that the series should be introduced to the public under the general title of THE WESTMINSTER LIBRARY. It is hoped, however, that contributors may also be found among the distinguished Clergy of Ireland and America, and that the Westminster Library will be representative of Catholic scholarship in all English-speaking countries.

INTRODUCTORY.

UNTIL comparatively recent days the Church in England had to struggle for her very existence. Three hundred years had passed away during which every force that the world could wield was brought against her, from the rack and the gallows down to civil disabilities and social ostracism. It was with difficulty that her children could be educated in their faith or their fathers practise it. She went, as has been said, down into the catacombs again, content if she could but preserve the deposit committed to her trust, to bring it up once more into the light of day so soon as this tyranny should be overpast. That time has at last arrived, and the security of her position once more has been marked by such events as the recent Eucharistic Congress held publicly in London.

Innumerable results have, however, emerged from this period of twilight. She has come out again, it is true, the same as ever, yet her retirement in the dark has had its inevitable effects—effects indeed that, like scars received in battle,

are to her honour rather than her disrepute from the cause for which she has suffered them—yet effects that on the human side to some degree hinder her usefulness. There has grown up, for example, a certain almost indefinable barrier between her children and those of the world, misunderstandings and ignorances on either side that ought not to be: her children are accused of being "un-English" or "Italian," and to some extent acquiesce even gladly in the charge; her ceremonial for instance has scarcely a full national continuity with that which she used four hundred years ago; a thousand instincts, manners of speech and behaviour, phraseology and the like separate her from the children of those who were her children: she has been forced into the company of those who were once partly foreign to her, and lost touch with traditions which, though utterly unessential, might have been found useful for her re-introduction to the country which was once her own.

And more than this:—

In penal days the supreme duty of Catholics was that which has been mentioned—to keep the faith. It was for this that their fathers bled and suffered. It is not to be wondered at therefore that here and there Catholics should be found who still are apt, almost unconsciously, to regard this as their whole duty before God and man,

and to forget that the supreme commission given by Christ to His disciples was the handing on fully as much as the retaining of the truth given to their charge. In the days of persecution more could hardly be hoped than that the candle of the Church in this country should not be utterly extinguished; in the present day of mutual toleration and comparative freedom, surely that suspended commission revives once more, and the duty of Catholics (and especially of priests) lies not only in the sphere of pastoral work, but of missionary endeavour: it must not be sufficient to keep the light burning in the hearts of those in whom it has always burned; it must be fanned once more into a conflagration that must spread.

Yet a further difficulty meets the missionary even here. He has been trained admirably indeed in the principles of his own theology, but, from force of circumstances, knows little or nothing of the principles of those with whom he is surrounded. He can declare his own faith lucidly and exhaustively; but he knows little or nothing of theirs. It is not possible in the textbooks which are at his disposal to allow more than a few lines to the discussion of the principal non-Catholic sects. To him — and rightly—all turns on the principle of authority, and supremely of that authority committed by

Jesus Christ to His Vicar; to him, therefore, those that have rejected this have rejected the very ground and safeguard of a right faith. He looks about him, at the swarming sects of England, at the rent and divided National Church, held together as it is at present by little more than its establishment in the State, and sees there but one thing, flagrant and obvious, the ruin that falls upon even the most utterly sincere endeavours after truth, where the guiding principle of authority has been lost.

Yet if he stops at that conclusion he is wrong. For, though the Divinely guaranteed authority has been lost, authority as a whole has not vanished. Rather, other authorities than the true have been substituted. Each sect or school of Christians, however incoherent and unruly it may appear to the orderly Catholic mind, yet has some theory both of Christianity and of the grounds of faith. There has been some principle at work (usually a sound, though a disproportioned or isolated principle) that has brought that sect into being and selected its dogmas. It has not been by mere arbitrary chance that the "Salvation Army" has come into existence, or this or that school of thought in the Church of England. Each group of Christians has watchwords of its own, a selection of dogmas, a principle of interpretation, an aspect of the faith that has made it

what it is. . . . And in every one of these there is a modicum of truth.

Now while on the one side, a sympathetic setting forth of Catholic truth is far more effectual in the conversion of the world than even the shrewdest attacks upon the religion of others—than even the most complete demolition of their positions—yet there must be coupled with this proclamation of the faith, if it is to find its way to the majority of minds, a certain measure of understanding of the religious theories of those to whom it is made. An enormous amount of energy has been expended uselessly in the past, in assaulting positions that are no longer held. For example, the old Protestant position of Justification by Faith only, has been practically relinquished long ago—at any rate in its old bald sense—by the vast majority of non-Catholics. Rather, the pendulum has swung so far that it would be truer to say that the average Protestant nowadays believes rather in Justification by works only. And this is but one example out of many. Or again ; it is mere waste of time to talk to the Ritualist of the present day as if he acknowledged no authority in matters of faith except his own individual taste and judgment. Practically that may be true—it may amount, that is, to the same thing—yet theoretically, and above all, in his opinion, it is utterly untrue. He

has an authority—a formidable and a most subtly-conceived authority too—to which he pays, at any rate in theory, as much deference as the Catholic to the Vicar of Christ. It is foolish to treat him as if he had none—to explain to him laboriously that a Revelation must have a Living Voice to interpret it: he knows that well enough: his mistake lies not in want of submission, but in submission to an authority that has no right to claim it.

In a word, therefore, it is necessary if controversy is to be fruitful, that the missionary should know something, at least in outline, of the religious theories of those to whom he is sent. He must be able to recognize and to do justice to those portions of religious truth, to those true though imperfect and disproportioned principles, held by those whom he seeks to convert. Cardinal Manning summed up the secret of successful proselytism in a terse and luminous metaphor: "We must be able to play dominoes," he said, "with those with whom we argue".

This then is the object of the following chapters: To set forth as sympathetically as possible the broad outlines of the various religious systems that for the most part flourish in England to-day outside the borders of the Catholic Church; to lay stress upon what is true in them, rather than on what is false; and, finally, to indicate

as far as possible in each instance the corrective Catholic principle that is lacking. It was the writer's own experience in the past that such treatment on the part of Catholic authors did more to help him forward to the truth than all the merely destructive criticism ever published. Again and again he was repelled by what seemed to him a lack of appreciation of his own position, a want of justice done to certain religious principles that seemed to him then, and that seem to him still, to contain a measure of real truth. He cannot, of course, hope to do justice as he ought to those positions which he never occupied; but he has done his utmost by enquiry and study to fulfil his obligations.

Finally, it is not part of the object of these chapters to discuss the rise or the history of the various denominations described, except so far as may be necessary for the elucidation of their present religious positions.

Note.—The reader will notice that about half the volume is devoted to a discussion on the Established Church. This is done, partly because that body claims about half the Christians of England, partly because it offers, in its various sections, a kind of microcosm of English religion as a whole; and partly because its tenets and formularies are more fixed and more deliberate

than those of other denominations, and therefore can be treated more at length. In the case of many of the Nonconformists, either there is no written creed at all; or, such as there is, embodied in trust-deeds, is of practically no authority. It will be noted, too, that towards the end of the book, each denomination is treated with increasing brevity, since those elements common to nearly all the sects have already been discussed at length.

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PART I.

EPISCOPALIANISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH OF ENGLAND (GENERAL).

1. It was not the original intention of the sixteenth century "reformers" to substitute, *tout court*, the principle of private judgment for that of Catholic authority—rather to substitute a national authority. This national authority was to consist, practically, of Convocation with the sovereign at its head, who should give to the spiritual decisions of a more or less spiritual body, the same kind of royal assent as was given to the decisions of Parliament in temporal matters. This, at least, seems to have been the intention of Elizabeth, an intention that was carried out more or less adequately even up to the times of the Stuarts. It has only been through the later development of the Constitution that the authority of Parliament, and, above all, of the Privy Council, has been substituted (greatly to the resentment of that High Church party which has always more or less existed within the borders of the Establishment) for the supposed spiritual authority of the Crown.

This position, therefore, still hotly claimed by High Churchmen, has a real historical basis, and is not nearly so intolerable, even to Catholic eyes, as what has become the situation in practical politics—viz., that a body of men none of whom need belong to the Established Church should be the supreme authority in the matter of that Church's faith, nor so intolerable again as that other position—never really a part of the original idea of the first founders of the "Reformed Church"—of purely private judgment. If once the Catholic idea of authority be rejected—the idea, that is, of a Supranational Church presided over by an infallible head—the next best expedient, so to speak, is exactly that with which the Church of England originally began—of a religious synod whose decisions, in order to receive national authority, must be ratified by a supreme personage whose assent is also required in temporal laws passed by a secular assembly named Parliament.[1] The sovereign thus becomes the link between Church and State, the culminating point in which both unite; he has, to some extent, an ecclesiastical as well as a secular character; as is shown, it is claimed, by the ecclesiastical garments—stole, alb, and girdle—with which from time immemorial he has been clothed at his coronation. One more indication still remains at the present day of the original design with which the "Reformers" set out, in the fact that Convocation is still summoned by the writ of the

[1] This is the position of the Russian "Orthodox" Church, and indeed must be the ultimate condition, in some form, of every *National* religious body.

sovereign in the same kind of manner as are the Houses of Parliament.

2. The theory, however, has utterly broken down practically, as, indeed, it was bound to do. Men, both within and without the borders of the Establishment, began, inevitably, to ask themselves by what right a national authority had been set up in matters of religion. There was at least, they said, an arguable position in defence of the Petrine prerogative; there was none whatever for a national prerogative, except one that might be extended indefinitely and graduatedly in the direction of private judgment. If it was necessary for each nation, owing to its own character and temperament, to have a Church of its own, it was equally a fact that no nation is completely of one character and temperament; but that a nation consists of groups exactly as in a parallel manner the world consists of nations. Congregationalism, therefore, came into existence within fifty years of the establishment of this new national authority. And, ever since, the principle has been extended both within and without the Establishment. Sect after sect has sprung into existence outside its borders; school of thought after school of thought within. The piece of rock, so to speak, detached from its position in the Rock of Peter, has crumbled into fragments, and even into grains; until one can see at the present time tens of thousands of individuals adhering to the State Church for reasons of association, convenience and even agreement with many of its principles, who acknowledge, for all that, not the smallest inherent

weight in its decisions bearing upon their own conscience.

3. It is this, of course, that makes it so extraordinarily difficult to deal with the Church of England as a whole, either as an adversary or a friend. It is possible—as has been found by the writer—to find casually gathered within one room three ardent adherents of the Establishment, religious and well-educated men, utterly unable to agree among themselves as to what are the very foundation principles of the Church to which they belong. National authority, except in a legal sense, has practically vanished. It is possible to find within the limits of a stone's throw one Anglican divine who preaches practically the entire cycle of Catholic doctrine with the exception of that bearing upon the prerogative of Peter; another who denies in scarcely veiled language the Corporal Resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as His birth of a Virgin; another whose utterances are so calculated and obscure as to defy reasonable analysis.

Partly, however, this has been the result of the deliberate policy of Queen Elizabeth and her advisers. It was her wish, without a doubt, to include within the National Church as many professing Christians as possible, from Catholic to Calvinist; and in this, for a while, she succeeded. Indeed, even at the present time, there are as communicants, and even ministers, in the Church of England, men who in dogmatic matters are practically the one or the other. At the present day there are a few clergy who teach explicitly the infallibility of the Vicar of Christ, as well

as others who could sign with scarcely any hesitation the Confession of Geneva.

It is therefore at the present day very little help towards the determining of a man's religious views to learn that he adheres to the Establishment, for each party or school of thought within her borders claims that its own interpretation of her formulas is the true one. There is one party, perhaps the most historically correct of all, claiming that all are equally legitimate, that all have an equal though not an exclusive right to teach their respective views. An instance perhaps will illustrate this position.

In the Catechism, as it stands to-day in the Book of Common Prayer, there is a certain statement as to the Presence of our Lord in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, that runs as follows:—

"[The inward part or thing signified is] the Body and Blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

Now it is well known that the Anglican doctrines concerning the Real Presence, tolerated even up to the present day, run from teaching very like Transubstantiation on the one side, to something resembling Zwinglianism on the other. (It is safer to say, perhaps, with the late Archbishop Temple, that almost anything may be taught except actual Transubstantiation and actual Zwinglianism. He expressly included Consubstantiation within the range of permitted doctrines.)

Now it will be noticed that the above-quoted answer

in the Catechism is designed, with quite extraordinary skill, to include the two extremes of the doctrine on this point permitted to Anglicans. In the first two phrases "The inward part" or "thing signified," the child is, so to speak, given his choice between a real Substance actually present, or a *Res* not actually present, but symbolized. The rest of the sentence depends entirely for its meaning upon the emphasis put upon the words. The "Receptionist" emphasises the words "*by the faithful*"; the High Churchman puts his accent upon "*verily and indeed taken and received*". And the Broad Churchman finds in the doubtfulness of the definition, a doubtfulness of the thing defined.

This is, however, but one instance out of many.[1] And it is impossible to doubt in face of the history of the times when the Articles and Prayer Book were originally drawn up and successively revised, and of the wide divergence in the views of those responsible, that it was indeed the deliberate policy of the authorities to expand the limits as widely as possible, and to provide formularies that would satisfy as many parties as were capable of being accommodated. It is this, then, that makes it so difficult to determine what exactly is the teaching of the Church of England on disputed points. It is easy to determine which views are tolerated; it is impossible to determine which are authorized. That party then, as we shall consider later, which seems to have most right to speak in the name of the Church of England, consists of those who teach that she has no fixed views upon most of these

[1] Also Articles of Relig., nos. xvii, xxi, xxxi, xxxii, etc.

disputed points, but permits the most wide and the most varying interpretations.

4. A further difficulty in determining what is the Faith of the Church of England lies in the extraordinary character of the changes and the revivals that have taken place within her borders. It is now this, and now that school of thought that is predominant. Up to the close of the seventeenth century the High Churchmen, springing from the Stuart revival, more or less held the field. There succeeded to them the reign of Latitudinarianism, culminating in such men as the Socinian Clarke, and Tindal, opposed respectively by Waterland and Butler. Under John Wesley, at the close of the eighteenth century, personal religion, and the sense of personal responsibility, inspired by an intense realization of Grace and the Atonement, came to the front. Finally in the Oxford Movement the old sacramental system that underlies much of the Prayer Book, ideas of Church authority and of corporate religion, revived once more, and produced the present race of High Churchmen who have done so much to "Catholicize" within national limits the old Church of the Reformers. The result is that there are succeeding schools of recognized Anglican divines, no two of which are in complete accord together, yet not one of which can properly be called disloyal to the Church of England. And to each such school it is possible for every party at present existing in the Church of England to appeal with confidence, and in it to find its justification.

The result is, of course, that there is no established

body of authorized Anglican doctrine to which appeal can be made; and there is, in the Catholic sense, no proper theological course for candidates for the ministry. The "theological colleges" range, in their doctrinal standpoints, from something very like Catholicism to something very like Calvinism. At Ely, for example, the doctrines of Penance and of the Real Presence are plainly taught and acted upon, and the life of the place is largely modelled upon that of Catholic seminaries, though with far fewer safeguards; at Kelham the life and the course of studies are really seminarian, and even monastic; while at Ridley Hall, at Cambridge, the teaching is markedly Protestant, and the life constructed upon such lines as those of the "prayer-meeting" and "Scripture-unions". And these colleges, with the numerous grades to be found between them, in such places as Mirfield, Cuddesdon, Ripon, Lincoln, and the rest, are accepted by the bishops as recognized training-places for the Anglican ministry, and of equal responsibility.

It can easily be seen then how inadequate from the Catholic point of view must be the theological studies of the Anglican clergy—and, indeed, this is inevitable from the very nature of the Establishment. It may be said almost without exaggeration that there is not one dogmatic text-book recognized simultaneously by all the bishops, not one author satisfactory to the entire Bench. Certain books and writers are commonly recognized—Pearson on the Creed, Waterland on the Eucharist, Harold Browne on the Articles; but these books are distinguished for their "comprehensiveness"

and "safeness" rather than for any clear dogmatic teaching. Examinations for Orders, therefore, range over a very vague kind of area: books such as those just mentioned are commonly the principal dogmatic text-books: a history-book or two dealing almost exclusively either with the first three or four centuries of the Christian era, or with the Reformation period; the Greek Testament, treated almost entirely from the critical, the historical, and the ethical point of view, with particular reference to one gospel and one epistle; a biography of some uncontroversial kind of saint; the writing of a sermon; and a little "pastoral theology"—these subjects form the substance of the entire examination. Moral theology finds no place in the scheme; and those clergy who from the character of the parishes in which they will take up work, or from their own private views, will include the hearing of confessions among their activities, are left entirely to themselves to pick up what knowledge they care to gather as regards the guidance of souls and the principles of morality. Of course the bishops cannot do otherwise, since they have to rule men of such diverse views; but the result is none the less lamentably incoherent.

To sum up then, before passing on to a detailed consideration of the various schools of thought that find their place to-day in the Anglican Communion; we notice first that there is no actual living Voice to-day within her borders—or, if there is, it has not yet been identified—at whose word the theologians must be silent. This voice is claimed for the Privy Council

by one party, for Provincial Synods (never actually held) by another, for the "Catholic Church" (understood in a peculiar sense, and to be discussed later) by yet another. Yet there has been up to the present no common recognition of any one of these authorities by all the parties together. The bishop, generally speaking, is supposed to be the censor of doctrine in his diocese, yet those of his clergy who differ from him in dogma have no hesitation in disregarding his directions. There are formularies indeed to which we are directed by each school in confirmation of its theories; but they are formularies drawn up with the obvious, and indeed avowed, intention, of being patient of practically all the systems of belief with which the Anglican Church abounds. Certainly the average High Churchman, and even the Ritualist, is justified in appealing to the Prayer Book in defence of his position—it was intended that he should do so. But so it was intended that the Low Churchman should also do. Finally there is that school, commonly called Broad Church, taking up the very reasonable position that, since the Established Church deliberately refrained from deciding those controversies, the most loyal attitude of her children is to imitate her example. She permits the doctrine of the Objective Presence to be held, yet she also permits it to be denied. She condemns the "Romish doctrine . . . concerning the Invocation of Saints," but does not profess any doctrine on the point other than the "Romish"; she repudiates "Sacrifices of Masses," but she does not repudiate (or enjoin) any other undefined doctrine of

Eucharistic Sacrifice. While it is open then to her children to stand on this or that side in their interpretations of her formularies, the most loyal attitude —that which is most in accordance with her mind— is to refrain from positive affirmation or denial on these disputed points. Her children may have their minds formed on those matters, but she herself has not.[1]

[1] An example of what has been said may be seen in the missionary activities of the Church of England. The two great parties, "High" and "Low," are represented respectively, roughly speaking, by the "S.P.G." (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) and the "C.M.S." (Church Missionary Society). Of these two, at least until recent years, the C.M.S. has been far more active and far better supported at home; but the S.P.G. on the other hand in its actual organization in the mission-field and a more or less "Catholic," as opposed to merely national, ideal, seems in advance. Again, until recently, there has been practically no co-operation between these two societies, representing as they do two very diverse religions. The C.M.S. works on an emphatically Protestant basis, and in union with the undenominational "Bible Society" whose object is the translation and distribution of the Scriptures; while the missions established or supported by the S.P.G. comprise such centres as those which teach the whole range of Catholic doctrine and practice, including, for example, the famous "Six Points"—(eastward position of celebrant, altar-lights, vestments, mixed chalice, wafer-bread, and incense) and even such devotions as the Angelus and the use of "Holy Water". In England the public is more or less accustomed to the phenomenon of two or more religions in one Church, but the effect on the native mind abroad is said to be disastrous, especially when it is remembered that in missionary countries there is not to anything like the same extent the shadow of the Law to check extremes on either side. The native sees on the one side a man resembling in all externals of his life and appearances a Catholic priest—a celibate, and living often a life of hardship and isolation and even asceticism; and on the other a pleasant European household, with father, mother, children and servants: he notices also that the S.P.G. missionary very frequently devotes the greater part of his life to the work, if not the whole of it (as do the Catholic

mission-fathers), while the C.M.S. missionary, except in a few rare instances, looks forward to returning home in a few years. There could not be a greater contrast than between the two; both are estimable and hard-working people; both are equally accredited ministers of the Church of England; yet except in these two points they have hardly anything in common, beyond the use of a common Bible and Prayer Book from which each selects points that tend to fall in with his particular view of the Christian Faith. Quite recently, however, the S.P.G. by encouraging, and indeed sending representatives to, an "undenominational" Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, is threatened with the loss of many of its High Church adherents, who see in this act a participation in "schism".

CHAPTER II.

THE "CATHOLIC" PARTY.

(i) THE "HISTORIC HIGH CHURCH" PARTY.

1. IN the previous chapter it has been noted that what is known as the "High Church party" has a real right (generally considered), though not exclusive, to its interpretation of the formularies of the Church of England. For not only are those formularies for the most part patient of this interpretation, but there has been a practically continuous traditional succession of divines that has so interpreted them. Such men as Bishop Andrewes of Winchester, Dean Cosin, and Archbishop Laud are instances of this tradition and can quite properly be appealed to by their spiritual descendants of to-day. (It is necessary to use such phrases as "generally considered" and "for the most part" in discussing this question, since there are, as will be seen presently, certain recent developments of Ritualism which can claim no such authority.)

The "historic High Church party" therefore was far from being the invention of Dr. Pusey and his friends. In a book recently brought to light, for example, published in 1677, entitled "Officium Eucharisticum," and bearing an *imprimatur* from Lambeth,

such doctrines as that of the Real Presence, of Penance, of Prayers for the Dead, and even of some kind of Eucharistic Sacrifice are plainly set forth. This is but one instance out of many, showing that within the pale of the Established Church there still remained a strong "Catholic" tradition on many points for more than a hundred years after the "Elizabethan Settlement". The Oxford Movement did no more than reassert a legitimate interpretation of the Anglican formularies, which had for the most part been lost to view in the immediately preceding years of spiritual lethargy and latitudinarianism.

2. It is difficult to sum up precisely the contents of the creed held by this school of thought, since there are divergences within even those narrow borders. Briefly the following points may be noted.

The fundamental articles of the Christian Faith as stated in the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds are held in their natural sense, as they stand. On such points as those disputed to-day among other Anglican divines—as the corporal Resurrection and the Virgin Birth of our Lord—this school is rigidly orthodox. It was in fact largely owing to the zeal of this party, as represented by such men as Canon Liddon and Dr. Pusey, that the attack, in the last century, on the Athanasian Creed, was beaten off. The party stands as a symbol of the old solid school of piety and learning, disliking Puritan narrowness, latitudinarian laxity and "Popish innovations": they appeal to the "Primitive Church" as the touchstone of truth.

It is in this appeal to "Primitive Christianity"

that their significance really lies. To their eyes a shadow (to use the mildest language) fell upon Christendom as the centuries went by. There came about, they claim, chiefly through the arrogance of Rome, and largely through the entry of the world into the Church, a flood of developments and additions that had no true place in the Church of Christ. The Bishop of Rome, partly through the Roman genius for government, partly through the secular importance of the city of Rome, became "Lord over Christ's heritage" to an unwarranted degree. There might be allowed to him a certain primacy of honour, but no primacy of degree. He was, by rights, an eminent bishop among bishops, but in no sense a Bishop of bishops or a *Pater Patrum*. So was it also, in their view, with regard to certain doctrines. The entrance of a half-converted paganism into the Church swept in with it what were practically heathen doctrines: the *cultus* of the Saints as practised by Rome, to take one example, was an instance of this over-development of the genuine truth of the Communion of Saints. The learning of the schools again, and the passion for Greek philosophy, brought about an over-definition of true doctrines. The "Real Presence" they say, was undoubtedly revealed by Christ and believed in the Primitive Church; but Transubstantiation is no more than an exaggerated attempt to express the inexpressible in metaphysical language.

This fear of definition beyond that employed by the "Primitive Church" is characteristic of their whole position. They believe, as has been implied, in the

Objective Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the consecrated elements, but the contents of such words as *Transubstantiation* and *Concomitance* seem to them unwarranted interpretations of Christ's sayings. With regard to the latter point indeed they are usually explicit, and state outright that the "denial of the Cup to the laity" signifies a real loss of grace to the communicant. They believe also in some kind of Eucharistic Sacrifice, but shrink from any attempt to define in what that sacrifice consists. It is perhaps as a memorial sacrifice merely that they generally conceive of it.[1]

With regard to the Sacraments generally—with the exception of Holy Baptism, in which they are for the most part entirely orthodox[2]—there is the same note of hesitation. Penance, for instance, is undoubtedly a means of grace instituted by Christ for the forgiveness of post-baptismal sin, yet it is not sufficiently necessary for salvation to be urged upon all alike. A clergyman, they would say, would be justified in keeping silence—or very nearly so—upon the subject, if he were ministering to an old-fashioned congregation who would be seriously offended by the doctrine. Neither indeed need any person, however deep his sin, necessarily seek forgiveness in this way; it is a helpful practice to those who feel the want of it; it is neg-

[1] Bishop Andrewes stated that if "Transubstantiation" were "taken away" there would be no quarrel with regard to the Sacrifice between himself and Rome.

[2] A few, however, have curious views as to the relations of Baptism and Confirmation, and the almost suspended effect of the first rite until the reception of the second.

ligible by those who do not. On Holy Matrimony the "historic High Church" party is, usually, orthodox, with exceptions that will be noticed presently; though many of them would shrink from calling it a Sacrament outright. Perhaps the hesitating and confused tone of the twenty-fifth Article best expresses their attitude towards this and the Sacraments generally. "Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not the nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God. . . ."

Finally, it must be noticed that this party under discussion would welcome as cordially as any Ritualist the restoration of Extreme Unction—that "lost star of the Anglican firmament" —though they wax very severe upon the supposed practice among Catholics of postponing its administration until imminent danger of death.

3. The attitude then of the "historic High Church" party is best gauged by the examples given above. Its members believe resolutely in the essential continuity of the Church of England with the Church in England before the Reformation—they believe, that is to say, that the changes which took place in the sixteenth century concerned unessential matters, and did not vitally affect the Church's life. They point to

the Preface of the Ordination Service in the Book of Common Prayer as an evident sign that continuity was intended and effected; they believe in the priesthood of their ministers, in the objective reality of the Sacraments; and they hold that such matters as were dropped altogether at the period of crisis—such as the Primacy of Peter—were innovations upon the original truth as held by the Primitive Church and therefore best removed. Their indefiniteness—at once their weakness and their strength—on such matters, for example, as the state of the faithful departed, the relations of the Saints with men—and kindred things—rests of course upon the extreme difficulty in ascertaining precisely (since they reject the living continuous tradition that alone can interpret "Primitive Christianity") what it was that "Primitive Christianity" actually did teach upon such points.

It will be seen then from these examples that the "historic High Church" party, so far as it is faithful to itself, is worthy of real respect and reverence in these days of latitudinarianism. "So far as it is faithful to itself"—for there are signs on all sides that it is beginning to break up at last. It is giving birth, little by little, to a series of subdivisions, one or two of which must be considered separately. Yet in itself, as originally re-conceived in the Oxford Movement, it is refreshingly orthodox on many fundamental matters; it is scholarly and it is modest. These points constitute, as has been said, its weakness and its strength. It contains elements of strength, since it relies upon its scholarship, its devotion to the Fathers, the Holy

Scriptures, its knowledge of history. Most of the considerable Anglican commentaries upon the Scriptures, of the editions of the Fathers, and of volumes of nineteenth century Church history, are the work of its members. It has been in the past, at least, resolute in the face of adversity, and now in the presence of unpopularity and ridicule. It is because of its labours and sufferings that the Church of England stands where it does to-day.

Yet its weaknesses are no less obvious. Plainly, with its reluctance to define, its attempt to clothe present-day religion in the garb of a thousand years ago, it is a form of faith singularly unfitted to meet the needs or attract the devotion of the poor and uneducated. It was not until Ritualism met and transformed it—or rather developed out of it—that it began to lay hold upon the slums. To this day it means but little in country districts. Its self-denying and devoted representatives win the affection of their flocks; but its system still smacks of the study and the Oxford common-room.

4. Its ceremonial is as difficult to define as its precise creed. For, while this party professes to follow the Book of Common Prayer strictly and loyally, the same doubt prevails as to the ceremonial (as to the doctrine) exactly intended by the Prayer Book. It would be useless to discuss the controversy in all its elaborations; but briefly it may be summed up by saying that the actual words of the "Ornaments Rubric" seem to enjoin the Eucharistic vestments and the usual accessories of Catholic worship, but that the whole history of

practically the first three centuries of the Church of England's existence seem to show that such an interpretation of the Rubric was never intended or tolerated by the authorities.[1] It is possible then for all parties in the Church of England to claim solid reasons for their own points of view—to use a chasuble, or a surplice, lighted candles, unlighted candles, or no candles at all. Neither is the appeal to the "Primitive Church" of much use; since while it may be true that something resembling the defined ceremonial and vesting of to-day was then employed, it is also quite easy—if the living continuous tradition be set aside—to make out a case for the statement that the accessories of worship in those days had not the same defined significance that they have now. The ceremonial, then, employed by the "historic High Church" party, as distinguished from the Ritualists, is marked by soberness and reverence rather than by any particular principles. Vestments, often of linen, may sometimes be used, as also candles and the "Eastward position" of the celebrant at the Holy Table. Generally speaking, however, the type of worship employed in Anglican cathedrals—which are, very largely, the strongholds to-day of the party in question—may be taken as characteristic of the party as a whole. Careful and sometimes beautiful music, excellent and reverent reading and behaviour, a certain kind of quiet recollectedness and dignity—these are, perhaps, as much as anything can

[1] The *explicit* directions in the first Prayer Book of Edward VI to the celebrant to wear a "vestment or a cope" at the altar, disappeared in the second Prayer Book of 1552 and were never restored.

be said to be, significant of the rather undefined piety and learning that distinguish these divines.

5. The party, however, as has been said, has undergone a good deal of development since the days of the Oxford Movement. It is a matter of lamentation sometimes among its followers, that so few are left of the original type. This is largely true. It has given birth to Ritualism on the one hand (which requires a separate chapter for its treatment) and to what is called with some tinge of contempt "Moderate High Churchism" on the other. It may be as well in this place to discuss this second type.

"Moderate High Churchism" is largely degenerate from its parent. It retains indeed the quietness, the hesitation, and the refinement; but it has lost to a large extent the fine rigidity, the asceticism, the stern "orthodoxy," as well as the profound learning of the Oxford divines. Its loss of "orthodoxy" is shown to a great extent in its attitude towards the State. The Oxford men held almost as one of the "marks of the Church" that it should be at enmity with the world: Moderate High Churchmen tend to hold that friendship with the State, with the "great heart of the people," —conformity with public opinion as voiced by Parliamentary authority—are signs of the sweet reasonableness of true religion. An Established National Church, they say (and with considerable sense), must give and take; it must endeavour to avoid conflict: it should represent so far as possible the religious instincts of the nation as a whole. We see therefore at the present time an immense body of Anglican opinion to

the effect that when the State legislates concerning marriage, for example, the Established Church must accept that legislation so far as possible—and how far is possible has not yet been decided. Divorced persons have been occasionally re-married with the blessing of the Church of England in the lifetime of their partners: the "innocent party" in a divorce is frequently so re-married. The Church of England declared plainly enough in her "Table of Prohibited Degrees" her opinion that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was contrary to the Law of God—an opinion which she alone holds in Christendom—yet she, as represented by the Moderate High Churchism that prevails to-day, seems to be acquiescing without any very great difficulty in the altered circumstances brought about by the recent legislation on the part of the State.

For there is no doubt that "Moderate High Churchism" is at present the average of Anglicanism —that is, its centre of gravity. Its characteristic is that its principles are almost impossible to define. Its phraseology, its ceremonial, its deportment generally—these are easy enough of statement. It speaks a good deal of the "dear old Church of England," it claims continuity with Pre-reformation days when "Church Defence" is in question; it repudiates continuity in matters of unpopular doctrine; its ceremonial is refined, elegant and reverent: but is not significant of anything in particular. It disregards *Corpus Christi;* it celebrates Harvest Festivals with a wealth of pomp and pumpkins; it does not

elevate the Host; but it elevates the almsdish. It is very clerical; but not at all sacerdotal.

Its principles then are impossible of definition. They consist rather of the least common multiple of Catholicism and Protestantism properly so called. Its members confess the Real Presence in words, but not in action; they prefer a hymn to a genuflection; they defend the Sacrament of Penance, but do not attempt to frequent it; they confess their belief in an altar and a priesthood, but not an altar of sacrifice nor a sacrificing priesthood.

This summary of "Moderate High Churchism" is not, I think, too severe. It is not nearly so severe as that which would be given of it by the ordinary Ritualist who is in full communion with its members. For the Moderate High Churchman is the despair of all other parties in the Establishment who have definite principles. In the education question, the defence of the Athanasian Creed, or of the marriage laws, his support is never to be depended upon. His tendency is to consider the essence of Christianity to be a spirit and a temper of mind rather than a body of truth or of precepts, still less a kingdom in any intelligible sense. He professes to appeal to the Prayer Book and to the general sense of Christendom as a whole—especially (following the "historic High Church" party) primitive Christendom—yet he does not usually abstain on Friday, not fast before Communion: he may do so, out of personal devotion, but he will not attempt seriously to urge such things upon his parishioners. These are, indeed, comparatively

very small points, but they illustrate admirably his relations with that historic party from whom he claims his descent.

6. In treating of the method with which the priest can best deal with members of the High Church party as described so far, it is first necessary to insist very strongly upon the deep cleavage—psychological rather than dogmatic—already mentioned, between the "historic High Church" party and their "Moderate" successors. Externally the two schools of thought appear very similar. There is an absence of ostentation and of extreme ritual in both alike; there is a quietness, a refinement and a dignity in the details of worship, and there is a great deal of common phraseology in use. Both describe themselves as "loyal Anglicans," as "strong Churchmen," as "Prayer Book Christians".

Yet there is a deep gulf separating them.

The "historic High Church" party possess very clear principles indeed. They have perhaps as good an acquaintance with "Primitive Christianity" as it is possible for anyone to have who does not live in the continuous and vital tradition which flows from it in the Catholic Church; and, so far as they can verify the principles that prevailed in those days—interpreting them, of course, sincerely enough, though mistakenly, in Anglican terms—they seek to live by them. They bow, in reality, to an authority conceived of as outside of themselves, and will correct themselves by it. Such men as these seek sacramental absolution, will abstain on Fridays, will punctiliously recite daily

the morning and evening offices of the Book of Common Prayer, and usually fast before Communion; and they are genuinely and sincerely shocked by what they conceive to be Roman innovations on the purity and simplicity of the Gospel as it was held in the first four or five or six centuries of the Christian era.

It is as well, then, to remember these things clearly. The "historic High Church party" is not simply Protestant in the ordinary sense. Its representatives do not for one moment claim to interpret the Scriptures, each man for himself. Their common phrase is "The Church to teach and the Bible to prove". Certainly they maintain all Church teaching must be continually checked and tested by the Holy Scriptures, but it is by the Scriptures as interpreted by the Early Fathers, rather than taken baldly by each man separately.

The weakness of the position lies of course in three or four obvious points that may be suggested with advantage to persons of his manner of thinking.

(*a*) Teaching of this kind implies that the truth as committed by Christ to His Church was so far prevailed against by the gates of hell as to disappear practically underground for about one thousand years. Certainly it still lived, assert the High Churchmen of this party, in sufficient strength to emerge again at the Reformation; yet it was distorted and disfigured almost beyond recognition by the usurpations of Rome. This position is surely a confession of the failure of Christ's mission to a very appalling degree.

(*b*) Another weak point is the extreme arbitrariness of fixing four or five or six centuries as the period

of purity. Besides who, it may very properly be asked (assuming this theory), is to fix that period with any degree of certainty? For it is exceedingly difficult to extract from Anglicans of this school any statement as to which Councils are ecumenical, as to in what ecumenicity consists; or to draw from them any principles by which the Council of Ephesus or Nicæa may be identified as ecumenical, and the Council of the Lateran or of Trent as merely sectarian.[1]

(*c*) A third difficulty is in that conception of the nature of Revelation to which the theory gives rise. When the Catholic remarks that an infallible Revelation ceases to have even certitude unless there be an infallible living authority to certify it: or when he points out that the Council of Nicæa in employing the word *homoöusios* did not add to, but merely made explicit, the original Faith of the Church never before so defined, and argues thence that the same thing is true of every ecumenical Council up to the end of time—the "historic High Churchman" has no adequate answer. All that he can do is to reassume that which needs to be proved—viz., that at a certain point in time the Holy Spirit ceased to safeguard the Catholic Church as a whole from dogmatic error; and fails to adduce any proof of this beyond his own private interpretation of the Patristic writings.

The method then which should appear most useful in dealing with persons trained in this school, seems to consist in bringing before their minds some glimpse

[1] The real reason for this selection of centuries is, no doubt, that by that selection a tolerable case can be made out for Anglicanism.

of that continuous unbroken stream of living tradition, that constant claim to, and exercise of, supreme and infallible authority, that holy audacity in settling controversies with the word of power, and in adding, as time and the developments of the world's thought demand it, new phraseology and new definitions to make explicit the one unchangeable truth delivered to the Saints—in short, all that true self-consciousness of power that is found alone in the occupants of Peter's chair. "He spake as one having authority," runs the Protestant version of St. Matthew, "and not as the scribes." "It was said by them of old time, but *I say unto you*"—this is the characteristic phrase on the lips of Incarnate Wisdom. It is not so much by arguing out point by point with these men that victory will lie on the Catholic side—so much as by directing attention to the living authority to-day that, by a confessedly unbroken succession, reigns and speaks in the Roman Pontiff. These men love the truth and follow it as it is discerned by them, in point after point; they are well accustomed to submission to the remote past. The best hope of meeting them is to acknowledge those virtues, to welcome their orthodoxy on so many vital matters, and to seek to set before them evidently an authority and a Presence that is promised to the Church "all the days"—not merely a selection of them —until the consummation of the world.

(ii) THE "MODERATE HIGH CHURCH" PARTY.

As regards the "Moderate High Churchmen" there is no one course more likely than another to be of

service in dealing with them—unless it be to compel them to think and to state what principles they really have—to drive them from words to thoughts, from vocabularies to things. Their religion consists so largely of emotion and sentiment—often beautiful and refined sentiment—of associations and artistic perceptions, as to defy logical analysis. They have never learnt theology in any recognized sense; they can expound, often admirably, the moral teachings of Scriptures and can defend from Scripture any doctrines which they happen truly to have assimilated; but they have never thought down to the roots of things, never defined even to themselves the grounds of faith, or the founts of truth. Their quotations are chiefly second-hand; they have not, like the "historic High Church party" thought or read much for themselves, or proposed to themselves any final authority whether in the past or the present for the interpretation of that Scripture which they usually maintain in conversation to be the only repository of Christ's original Revelation. They are the despair of their adversaries—and of their friends as well.

CHAPTER III.

THE "CATHOLIC" PARTY—THE RITUALISTS.

IT was from the "historic High Church" party that the Ritualists[1] took their rise. It was on that foundation that their stones were raised, and from their principles that Ritualist views were ultimately deduced. Yet as we examine the latter party to-day we see what astonishing developments have taken place.

1. The weakness of the appeal to the "Primitive Church" was comparatively soon perceived. There are traces of that discovery even among the first Oxford divines. It was seen that an authority which existed only in records, and those records of doubtful interpretation, could not bear the weight of modern activity of thought. Should new questions occur, for example — new heresies of which the "Primitive Church" had never dreamed—new interpretations of Scripture, which never came under the attention of the early Fathers at all—by what authority could such questions be answered? An attempt was made to turn

[1] The word "Ritualist" is not used in any invidious sense; merely because it is a convenient label. As a school, the Ritualists have considerably more than their proportionate share of Anglican zeal and spirituality.

to the bishops as representatives of the urgently needed Living Voice; but the trumpet gave an uncertain sound. The bishops could not always be relied upon either to agree among themselves or to give any answer at all; and when a united answer was given —as from time to time it was given—its contents were so alarmingly in opposition to the Primitive Church as interpreted by the appellants, as to cause widespread dismay. The customary fast before Communion was indignantly repudiated in one such answer; and a decided refusal to authorize selected clergy to receive confessions (obviously for fear of recognizing the practice at all) was no less strongly marked.

A certain portion then of the Oxford School turned to the Book of Common Prayer as affording a sufficiently Living Voice for all practical purposes; and that party forms one of the wings of the Ritualist School of to-day. The Scriptures, it is said, form the basis of Revelation; Catholic tradition generally speaking —that is the Fathers and at least the first seven General Councils—is the "remote" interpreter of the sense of the Scriptures; and for a practical guide, ready to hand, the Prayer Book is immediately sufficient. Even the bishops then, it is said by this party, must be judged by the Prayer Book. Clergy are bound to obey their bishops' "godly admonitions"—are bound to render "canonical obedience": but the bishops themselves are no less bound by the Prayer Book than are the rest of the clergy: therefore no command of a bishop should be obeyed, even if backed by the legal weight of Parliament or the Privy Council, if that

command transgresses the directions of the Prayer Book.

It may be seen what a fruitful source of controversy and division is thus generated; and it was chiefly upon these principles, indeed, that the unhappy prosecutions and imprisonments of devoted clergy a few years ago took place. Once more it is plain that the difficulty arises from seeking a Living Voice in a printed book. Certainly the dilemmas, arising from an appeal to the Primitive Church only, are avoided; a more immediate guide is provided by the Prayer Book; yet, in reality the problem is no nearer solution; since, just as the "Primitive Church" is capable of more than one interpretation, so too is the Prayer Book. A deadlock is the only possible result so soon as a bishop and a clergyman are equally persuaded, each that his own reading of the Prayer Book directions is the correct one. To take a single example—that has recurred again and again in recent years—while certain phrases in the Prayer Book turning round Sacramental confession are certainly at least patient of a Catholic interpretation, they are also patient, in the opinion of many devout scholars, of an entirely Protestant meaning. Which then is to decide? The parish-clergyman is persuaded that the Prayer Book urges him to teach the doctrine, and to receive the confessions of those that come to him: his bishop is equally confident that such a claim was repudiated by the Reformed Church of England. And, as the question of jurisdiction and the giving of faculties is practically unknown in the Anglican Communion, the bishop has no easy

remedy; and the effect is that the clergyman is conscientiously bound to teach and administer what he believes to be the Sacrament of Penance, and the bishop, conscientiously also, to denounce it. It is not then merely in theory that the situation becomes intolerable, but in matters of the most practical and vital consequence.

This then, roughly speaking, is the position of the more moderate school of Ritualists to-day. The Prayer Book is the interpreter of the Scriptures, and the individual is the interpreter of the Prayer Book. The Ritualist of this party supports his position by admirable arguments: he points out, and quite rightly, that the Prayer Book obviously was not intended to be a complete and final guide in every detail of doctrine and discipline: it was a book issued originally to men already trained in Catholic faith and worship; since then, according to his theory, the Church of England after the Reformation is continuous with the Church before the Reformation, a "Catholic" interpretation must be put upon all doubtful points and omissions. He must behave and teach as a Marian priest, conforming under Elizabeth, would behave and teach when the Prayer Book was first put into his hands: he must supply the *lacunæ* and carry out the imperfect directions in as "Catholic" a manner as possible. This is indeed a perfectly logical argument—granted the premises. (But it is met with some success by the answer of the extreme Low Churchman, who, assuming that the Church of England after the Reformation is essentially Protestant and Reformed,

turns rather to Geneva for his atmosphere and for the supplying of *lacunæ* and the solution of doubtful problems.)

2. With these premises, however, the "Prayer Book Ritualist" succeeds in establishing an extremely strong position (within the limits already stated) as regards both doctrine and worship. Regarding the printed words of the Prayer Book as his final guide, he clings to the "Ornaments Rubric" in its letter,[1] and claims to use all those accessories of worship that were in use in the second year of the reign of Edward VI. These include vestments, altar-ornaments, crucifixes and the like; they include even censers; but there is a controversy still undecided as to whether the entire omission of all directions to use incense does or does not invalidate this claim. It is argued ingeniously on one side that it does so invalidate the claim; but it is urged with equal force on the other that the direction that all these things shall be "in use," obviously implied that they shall be used. Therefore, any argument from the omission to direct their use is itself invalidated. (The point is only worth mentioning as an instance of one of the hundred minute difficulties that arise from the entire theory.)

In doctrine, too, the same argument is pursued with great success. Since the Church of England is

[1] "And here is to be noted that such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof, at all Times of their Ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of *England*, by the Authority of Parliament, in the Second Year of the Reign of King *Edward* the Sixth."

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according to the assumption, a living branch of the Church Catholic, a "Catholic" and not a Protestant interpretation must be put upon her doctrinal, as upon her ceremonial, formularies. It is impossible for a living and orthodox branch of the Catholic Church to be heretical, or even to permit heresy in her formularies. Therefore, the formularies of the Church of England, however obscurely or unhappily expressed, must be in their substance "Catholic". A distinction thence arises between what is truly "Catholic" and what is merely Romish: and those articles or statements of belief which *appear* to condemn Catholic doctrine cannot in reality do so: they only condemn either distinctively Romish tenets or merely unsound popular opinions. (Bishop Forbes' work on the Thirty-nine Articles is an admirable example of this method of reasoning, which indeed was also employed by an eminent Franciscan of the seventeenth century who desired, if possible, to bring about a reconciliation between England and the Holy See.)

An example or two of this mode of argument and its application will suffice to illustrate it.

The Thirty-first Article states that "the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, [are] blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits". Now it would appear to the simple Catholic as if it were hardly possible to frame a form of words that could repudiate more explicitly the Catholic doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Altar and its fruits. Yet the Ritualist finds no such

meaning in the words. He holds, at least confusedly, that the sacrifice of the altar is indeed the offering of Christ by the priest on behalf of the living and the dead for the purpose of winning remission of sins and satisfaction for them; and he has also been compelled to assent to this Article of Religion as a condition of his holding office in the Church of England. He distinguishes therefore between the "sacrifice of the Mass" and the "sacrifices of Masses," and declares that the Article is directed not against the Catholic doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, but against popular Romish errors to the effect that the multiplication of Masses is of more effect than the offering of one Mass. Since each Mass is in itself of infinite effect, ten Masses he argues cannot be of more effect than one! It is unnecessary, of course, to discuss the question further, in view of the history of the times when this Article was drawn up. Those who were responsible for it showed well enough by their actions—the destruction of altars, the cutting up of vestments into bed-quilts and stomachers, and their loathing of "massing priests"—that subtleties of this kind never even entered their minds. They hated the whole thing, root and branch, and said so. The Ritualist argument, however, shows plainly the bitter straits to which honest and sincere men are brought in their attempt to be loyal simultaneously to the formularies of the Church of England and to the Catholic faith.

Another instance may be given which has already been quoted in another connexion.

The twenty-second Article states that "the Romish

doctrine concerning . . . Invocation of Saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God".

Here again, considering the manner in which all invocation of saints was cut out of the Reformed Service book, the destruction of practically all the shrines of the Saints, except of St. Edward who happened to be of royal blood, and similar actions on the part of the "Reformers," the simple Catholic would conclude that the invocation of Saints was simply and plainly repudiated by the Church of England. He is confirmed in this view by the consideration that until the later phases of the Oxford Movement no Anglican dreamed of invoking the Saints,[1] and that after seventy years of that movement not one in ten thousand Anglicans dreams of it even now.

But the Ritualist, who is aware that the invocation of Saints was practised in the Primitive Church, and is at least as much used in the separated Churches of the East as in Western Christendom, is forced by his acceptance of the "Catholic Faith" to believe in it himself. Since therefore, he argues, the Church of England teaches and holds the "Catholic Faith," she must also teach and hold (or at least permit) the invocation of Saints herself. This Article therefore is directed not against the practice in itself, but against popular Romish errors concerning it, and he finds that error in the supposed custom on the part of ignorant Catholics

[1] Bishop Andrewes, the great High Church Caroline leader, expressly repudiates it ("Respons. ad Bellarm.," cap. 10).

of praying to the Saints instead of to God, and of thinking that the Saints will grant prayers that God will not. "*Doctrina Romanensium*," he says: that is, the popular abuses of extreme "Romanisers"; not the authorized official doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Lastly one more instance of the Ritualist argument may be given with respect to the famous Article dealing with Transubstantiation.

The passage of the Article (no. xxviii.) runs as follows: "Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but it is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. . . . The mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten . . . is Faith."

Once more, nothing could seem more explicit than this repudiation of a defined Catholic doctrine; until the Ritualist points out two or three considerations which enable him to sign this Article, and yet to hold and to teach the Catholic definition of the Real Presence. First, Transubstantiation was not defined in its present terms by the Council of Trent until after the formulation of this Article; therefore it is not the Tridentine decree that is denied, but some earlier conception of Transubstantiation. Secondly, the words of the Article evidently are directed against some conception—say Transaccidentation—which "overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament"; for Transubstantiation as described by the Council of Trent does not "overthrow the nature of a Sacrament". It is possible

therefore to hold Transubstantiation and to teach it[1]—the thing and the word—in the Tridentine sense: all that is repudiated is some false conception of the thing which, presumably, was in popular currency before the Council corrected it. (It is but fair to add that not all those who would be popularly described as Ritualists accept the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation; in spite of the fact that the separated Eastern Churches also teach the doctrine and use equivalent Greek words.[2] "Many repudiate as ardently as any of the "historic High Church" party that which they think to be an attempt to over-define a mystery on which Christ made no clear pronouncement. They accept the "Real Presence" *in confuso;* they dislike the definition of Its mode.)

3. Such, then, very briefly, is the doctrinal position of the more moderate school of Ritualists. While not all of them hold explicitly all the doctrines referred to above, it is yet possible by the methods of argument which have been considered, to include them all in their creed. It is possible, that is to say, so to treat the Formularies and Articles of the Church of England, as to render compatible with signing these the holding of nearly all Catholic doctrines. The Sacrifice of the Mass may thus be taught, with a doctrine of the Real Presence practically indistinguishable from the Catholic doctrine; Penance may be taught; the Invocation

[1] Comparatively recently a London clergyman was inhibited in a western diocese for a sermon he preached therein in which he taught explicitly Transubstantiation—word and thing.

[2] μεταστοιχείωσις, μεταβολή, etc.

of Saints; as well as many other doctrines which, in popular opinion, it was intended definitely to renounce at the period of the Reformation. The outward presentment of Church services also may, by the treatment of the Ornaments Rubric and of historical facts that have been mentioned, be approximated very closely indeed to Catholic worship.

Before passing on to the more extreme party among the Ritualists, it may be as well to sum up shortly a few obvious objections to the position already described.

(1) It may be pointed out, that the Prayer Book, as a written document, is in reality no nearer to satisfying the need for a Living Voice, than are appeals to the Fathers, or the Holy Scriptures. A written commentary—(particularly when that commentary is in itself patient of more than one interpretation)—on, let us say, the Laws of England, cannot possibly be a substitute for the living voice of a judge upon the bench. There is no *essential* difference between an appeal to the Prayer Book as a summary of Christian doctrine contained in the Scriptures, and the appeal to the Scriptures only, such as is made on the part of extreme Protestants. If religion is to be definite and practical, it must have an authority always capable of applying its principles and answering new questions. Now the only authority that even pretends to such a position in the Church of England as at present constituted—outside, that is to say, of the Privy Council which legally exactly fulfils this requirement—lies either among the bishops or in some kind of convocation or

synod. Such a tribunal as this, while it does not claim to be infallible, at least may claim the right to give *authoritative* definitions as to what the Church of England does or does not teach—(just as in the Catholic Church a provincial Synod or the mere word of a bishop can decide authoritatively matters that fall within their respective spheres). But this living authority, such as it is, is definitely, and frequently, repudiated by the Ritualist. He claims himself to judge his bishop by written formularies to which, as he says, both he and his bishops owe obedience. And in points on which he and his bishop differ he prefers of the two his own judgment—at any rate in doctrinal matters, as well as often in ceremonial. In a word, so far as there is a Living Voice at all in the Church of England, it lies, according to the Ritualist position, in himself. And this is nothing other than the extreme Protestant position of Private Judgment disguised under an appeal to the Prayer Book instead of to the Scriptures. (But the Ritualist is usually quite unaware of this.)

(2) In every kind and sort of Law, ecclesiastical as well as civil, the principle of *desuetude* is taken for granted. When a written rule is disregarded, practically from the time of its formulation, by the persons whom it is supposed to bind, with the tacit consent of the authorities whose business it should be to enforce it, and that for a considerable period, it is always assumed that the rule no longer binds, and cannot be suddenly revived by private or public personages. Judged by this canon the Ritualist argument falls

utterly to the ground. It is not disputed that these formularies and rubrics to which appeal is made by the Ritualists—e.g. the "Ornaments Rubric"—were entirely neglected, at least in the sense of the Ritualist interpretation, for about three hundred years. To appeal to them now as evidently binding is contrary to all ecclesiastical as well as civil precedent in the rest of Christendom. Of this character too is the appeal to the directions given to all clergy, in the Book of Common Prayer, to repeat daily the morning and evening services in public or private. It is a fact that the obligation to do so was never recognized by the clergy in general, until comparatively recently, nor ever, even now, enforced by the bishops; and, even at the present day, it is doubtful whether one in ten of the Anglican clergy recognizes it as binding in any way on conscience, or even as a counsel of perfection.

(3) A third objection—though it is one most difficult to bring home to the convinced Ritualist—lies in the extraordinary unreality of his method in interpreting the Articles and the Prayer Book to which he has given his assent. It is possible, as has been seen, so to treat these formularies as to force out of their actual words a signification which is not directly opposed to the Catholic faith; it is possible also to make out a case, in regard to one or two of them, to the effect that their authors and compilers intended the possibility of this interpretation—as has been seen previously with respect to the Catechism.[1] Yet when the student stands back from the picture and regards it as

[1] *Vide* pp. 5, 6.

a whole—when he looks, not merely at the written words in detail but at the opinions of those who drew them up, at the historical circumstances under which they were drawn up, and at the general consent as to their meaning put upon them ever since by all except those who have a case to defend—the unreality becomes apparent. The whole of Christendom in general, as well as the whole of the Anglican Communion with the exception of this recent school, has assumed that the Church of England, whatever she may have said in express words, was a Protestant and Reformed body, and has interpreted her formularies in that light. It gives a sense of startling unreality to find this one party assuming the precise opposite, and following therefore the precise opposite also in the method of interpretation. Nothing but the known sincerity and zeal of the persons who compose this party could save them from the charge of disingenuousness. It is a conceivable position that the Church of England largely *permits* them, as judged by her written formularies, to hold a considerable number of Catholic doctrines; but this is a very different thing from claiming, as these men do, her actual authority for them.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXTREME PARTY.

WE have seen how the "historic High Church" party with its appeal to the "Primitive Church," gave birth, by force of logical necessity, to that party among the Ritualists who hoped to find in an appeal to the Prayer Book an approximation to that Living Voice of which so crying a need became apparent. We pass on now to the further development of Ritualism among those who have actually found a Voice which seems at first sight to satisfy that need. In matters of doctrine *in se*, they do not differ greatly from their more moderate brethren. They are, usually, a little more emphatic and outspoken; they practise, or wish to practise, such devotions as spring directly from the doctrines they hold—such devotions as Benediction and the Rosary—a few of them, though negligible in number, profess even to hold the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, and to receive—(with the exception of the necessity of external submission to and communion with him)—all doctrines defined and taught by him. Yet, in the main, they do not differ in doctrinal matters very much from those who have already been discussed. It is in their fundamental position,

in the living authority to which they profess allegiance, that the difference lies. For they have seen plainly the weakness of any attempt to make written documents serve the purpose of a Living Voice; and they have seen too the impossibility of finding in their own bishops or Synods—still less, of course, in any State tribunal—an authority which will bring them into line with the rest of Christendom. They have found therefore something resembling a Living Voice, apart from all these, and to this, it must be said, they do indeed give the most unqualified submission. It is not possible then to bring against them the charge of mere individualism and Private Judgment; and their position, save for one fatal flaw that will be indicated presently, is, theoretically, perfectly reasonable.

1. They begin by the premise that the Church of England is not, or at any rate ought not to be, in any sense a separate entity. They deplore her apparent isolation from the rest of Christendom, assuming that once it was not so, and tracing all her misfortunes and divisions to the unhappy incident known as the Reformation. They lament, as much as any Catholics lament, the destruction of the Religious Houses, the abolishing of the old formularies, and the separation of Englishmen from the obedience of Rome. It may be asked then, very reasonably, why they do not return, as individuals, to that obedience; and their answer is at any rate chivalrous and gallant. The Church of England, they say, in spite of appearances, has retained all things absolutely necessary for Catholic life: she has retained the Sacred Ministry, the Sacraments and

the Creeds; Communion with the Roman Pontiff, though of the *bene esse* of the Church is not of its *esse:* it is *de jure ecclesiastico*, not *de jure divino*,[1] that he reigns. They quote in proof of this the Sacramental life of the Eastern separated Churches. Since then this is so—as assumed—it is plainly by Divine permission that the separation took place; and it would therefore appear to be part of the Divine Plan that England should for a time (in view of the strain on Catholic loyalty in the sixteenth century) have as a spiritual guide a Church which, though externally separated from the rest of Christendom, retained sufficient of the means of grace to sanctify her children and sustain in them the supernatural life; that this arrangement is, however, merely a temporary makeshift; and that the efforts of all "Catholic-minded" persons must be directed towards retaining the confidence of England on the one side and of healing the breach with Rome on the other. There can be no ultimate peace or security, they say, until that breach is healed; but, meanwhile, individual conversions hinder rather than help that Corporate Reunion which in God's time will come about.

Where then speaks that Living Voice to which, as has been said, they pay deference and which permits them, temporarily, to remain in that unhappy state of isolation? It is not in Canterbury, since Canterbury repudiates the theory so far as Canterbury utters any

[1] A very few extremists admit even the "divine right" of the Pope. Recently a considerable number of these in America made their submission to him.

voice on the matter: neither is it in Rome, since Rome reckons Catholicism to be coincident with her own borders. To understand the answer we must return a little.

It is assumed as a matter of course that those Christain bodies which have retained a valid ministry, the use of the Sacraments and the old Catholic Creeds together make up Catholic Christendom. It is assumed secondly that Canterbury has retained these essentials [1]; Canterbury, therefore, is "part" of the Catholic Church. The Church of England is occasionally spoken of by Ritualists as a "Branch"—occasionally (and more recently) as consisting of two Provinces—Canterbury and York—with Provincial rights and powers, but no more than Provincial. The phraseology is different; but the effect is very nearly the same.

Now the rest of the Catholic Church, according to this argument, is made up of Rome on the one side and of those Eastern Churches on the other which have retained the above-mentioned essentials of Catholicity. [It is a matter of dispute, to some extent, among the Ritualists, as to how far heresy disqualifies a body which in other matters is "Catholic" (e.g. The Copts in Egypt, who are, at least in their past history and their present formularies, deeply tainted with Eutychianism). Yet this makes no great difference to the argument, and can be waived for the present.]

[1] The question of Anglican Orders is too intricate to be discussed here. It is enough to remark that the Ritualist Clergy believe themselves to be in all respects validly ordained priests. As regards "jurisdiction" various theories prevail; but all are agreed that they possess it, if it exists.

All these bodies then, added together, constitute the Church of Christ; and none of them singly can claim ecumenical authority. The Voice therefore of the "Church" to-day is to be heard speaking in the mutual consent of these bodies, explicitly and intelligibly in an ecumenical Council, should such ever be held; but implicitly and sufficiently intelligibly, in their silent agreement. Where then these bodies are agreed, either explicitly, or by silence, that is the revealed Faith of Christendom; where these bodies differ among themselves, there are matters of private opinion.

An illustration or two may perhaps help to elucidate this position which, though a little difficult of statement, yet holds together perfectly intelligibly up to a certain point after a little consideration, and is, indeed, the basis of the religion of many devoted men and admirable scholars in the Church of England to-day.

Let us take for example the doctrine of the Real Presence—even of Transubstantiation.

Rome and the East teach it unfalteringly: Canterbury at least does not exclude it (if the Article on the subject is treated in the manner described in the last chapter). The Real Objective Presence then of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the altar is *de fide;* and in the opinion of some, Transubstantiation is *de fide* also. It does not matter if nine out of ten Anglicans, and even all the bishops of the Church of England deny it; it is of course sad if this is the case, but no more sad than the state of affairs in the fourth century when hundreds of undoubted bishops with many of

their flocks were tainted with Arianism. The true "Catholic" looks not to this bishop or that, but to the witness of the Church as a whole; and it is beyond question, says the Ritualist, what this witness is, with regard to the Real Presence, as also to other such doctrines as the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacrament of Penance, our Lady's place in the Divine Economy, the Invocation of Saints, Purgatory, and all the rest. Since all these things are taught by (what we may call for brevity's sake) Moscow and Rome, and are not absolutely excluded by Canterbury, these things are part of the deposit of faith, and must be believed by all faithful "Catholics".

When we come however to such matters as the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, Indulgences, and the presence or the absence of the *Filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed, we find ourselves on different ground. Here, the Ritualist says, there is not the same consensus of opinion, since Moscow and Canterbury do not teach or even permit to be taught what is defined by Rome on these matters. It does not follow that these doctrines are untrue; but only that they belong to the realm of speculative rather than dogmatic theology, and are therefore not *de fide*. They do not, that is to say, come to Christians with the authority of the Living Voice behind them—not, that is, with the unanimous consent expressed or unexpressed, of those bodies that, retaining the essentials of Catholicity, constitute altogether the infallible Church of Christ.[1]

[1] As a matter of fact, though illogically, nearly all the extreme Ritualists do hold the *Filioque* clause as *de fide*.

2. It follows, then, that many of these Ritualists are contemptuous, and even bitterly contemptuous of the Church of England as at present existing, declaring that they owe to her, as an authority, no spiritual deference at all, considering the terrible manner in which she has allowed herself to be Protestantized. She has retained, they believe, the bare essentials of Catholicity, by God's Providence; and she has preserved jurisdiction in England by the canonical succession of her bishops; "Catholics" therefore are bound, they believe, to be in communion with her, within the limits in which she has jurisdiction, to receive the Sacraments from her ministers and from none other, and to "hear Mass" in her buildings. But as a Christian teaching body she is almost beneath contempt, and well-informed "Catholics" who are her children are in a parallel position to that of Catholics of 1500 years ago who lived in the midst of an Arian community.

It is necessary, therefore, to understand the theory on which the extreme Ritualist position is based, if Catholic critics are to avoid dismissing Ritualists as merely insubordinate individualists.

Other points also flow from this position:—

(1) On the matter of jurisdiction the Ritualist, so far as he considers it at all (and is logical), is forced back upon a very mechanical view. Since he does not believe that jurisdiction flows from the Roman Pontiff—at least not *de jure divino*—he is compelled to believe that it is inherent in each "canonically appointed" bishop within his own diocese. Yet he does not carry the theory so far as to believe that a bishop who

denounces and repudiates sacramental absolution, in any sense withdraws implicitly the denied jurisdiction of his clergy; for jurisdiction, he thinks, is also conferred upon every clergyman in virtue of his ordination. He may hear confessions then, at least within the limits of his own parish, and, until recently, it was taken for granted that he might hear them anywhere. (Such is the most usual of the Ritualist theories of jurisdiction.)

(2) Since then jurisdiction is conferred upon Anglican bishops by virtue of their canonical appointment, not only are "Catholics" bound to be in communion with them in England, but it becomes a grave sin for them to frequent the services of the "Italian Mission". Yet on the Continent, where "Roman Catholic" bishops have jurisdiction, exactly the opposite is the result. There the "English Catholic" commits the sin of schism by attending churches or chapels of his own denomination (since these are as "schismatic" in France as are "Roman Catholic" churches in England). The theory is pushed so far by the Ritualists, that the laity are occasionally told by their clergy that they are within their rights on the Continent if they approach Catholic altars, and that they are justified, since they are really Catholics, in seeking absolution from Catholic priests, and concealing the fact that they are Anglicans. Few, however, fortunately, are so logical as this, and many, who in other respects are convinced Ritualists, are even more reasonable again. These latter, perceiving the disorganized state of Christendom (as they understand it), declare boldly that the old mechanical idea of

jurisdiction no longer holds, and frequent in England Catholic services with as much serenity as they frequent Anglican services elsewhere.

3. Now before passing on to consider a few obvious remarks to be made upon this Ritualist theory as a whole, it may be as well to comment upon one or two further difficulties which, as much as anything, render it hard for the Ritualist to relinquish his position.

(1) The undoubted revival of sacramental teaching in the Church of England during the past fifty years is to his mind a very strong argument indeed as to his "Catholicity". Here, he says, are plainly enough signs that the sacramental life of Anglicanism has remained within her borders in spite of appearances to the contrary. In face of the terrible decadence and lethargy that prevailed for so long, it is all the more remarkable that such a revival was possible at all. There are now thousands of persons who live and die in the Anglican Communion, relying entirely upon her sacraments, and finding in them both comfort and help. How terrible then, he says, is the responsibility of one who would leave a Communion in which God has shown so many evidences of His Presence and Power.[1]

(2) If then this is a serious consideration for the layman, how much more so for a "priest"; since, if he submits to the Roman Pontiff unconditionally, he must, if he wishes to minister as a priest, be unconditionally

[1] A further sign, he thinks, of her spiritual position, is to be found in the remarkable revival of the Religious Life within her borders, for both men and women, within the last fifty years.

ordained. And can he so give the lie to all his previous spiritual experiences, as to deny that that grace was real of which his whole conviction assures him, and in whose strength he has lived so long? How is it possible that so many confessedly good and learned men could have been deceived so long on so vital a matter?

The answer to these two objections is not very easy to state. Briefly, however, it would seem as if it lay best along the following lines.

Catholics do not deny—in fact they welcome cordially—the evidences of spiritual life as revived recently within the Church of England. They believe, in fact, so far as they have studied it, that this revival is designed by the Providence of God in order that England may be gradually re-inured to Catholic doctrine, and re-united to the Roman See. They even welcome the fact that this revival has taken place along sacramental lines.

But this does not in the least involve the validity of the sacraments. For Anglican sacraments, on the Catholic estimate, are at any rate honest attempts at fulfilling the institution of Christ, and, further, offer vivid and pointed opportunities for real "acts" towards God. The Anglican penitent, on whom rests no compulsion to approach the tribunal of penitence, must, to begin with, have a generous disposition towards his Saviour, and, further, in the act of confession meets with an excellent occasion for eliciting from himself a real act of contrition. The sense of reconciliation then that he feels, is in no way an illusion; it may

very well be that times and again he has received, through his own act, exactly that which he sought—pardon and grace. Precisely the same argument holds with regard to Communion. Although that which he receives is mere bread and wine taken in remembrance of Christ's Passion, yet the reception is to him an opportunity of spiritual communion, all the more likely to be grasped owing to his subjective conviction as to the validity of the act. The convert therefore is not obliged to deny any *spiritual* experience undergone as an Anglican; but only, in submission to the Church on a purely theological point, to confess himself mistaken as to the mode in which that experience presented itself and the particular character (not the fact) of the grace received.

As to the point raised with regard to the impossibility of those confessedly learned and good men being mistaken as to their own priesthood; it may be as well to point out that the argument cuts both ways: since there have been and still are thousands of equally good and learned men who being, on the Anglican contention, true "Catholic priests" are utterly unaware of it, and, indeed, strenuously deny it. If it is hard to believe that a mere pious "minister" may mistakenly think himself a priest; it is at least as hard to believe that a pious "priest" can think himself a mere "minister". If it is hard to think that the contents of the Anglican chalice consist merely of wine, though in hundreds of churches it is treated as the Precious Blood; it is far harder to think that that which in reality would be the Precious Blood if Anglican Orders

were valid, could be treated as mere wine for nearly three centuries by practically all Anglican clergy, and by the majority even up to the present day.

4. It is necessary to pass on now to a consideration of the extreme Ritualist position as a whole, and to indicate the one fatal flaw that runs through it from top to bottom.

First, however, it may be as well to remember that a principal *prima facie* argument lies against it in the fact that until the last twenty or thirty years the position was never dreamed of. It is impossible, so far as I am aware, to find a single Reformation or Caroline divine who ever even hinted at the position, or a single Oxford leader who suggested it. This is not, of course, a final argument against its truth: it is theoretically conceivable that a small recently created section in the Church of England is right, and all the rest wrong.

Secondly, it is worth observing how exceedingly difficult a theory it is to put into practice. If it were really true that the agreement of Moscow, Canterbury and Rome constituted the Living Voice of Christ's Church, how is it that this Living Voice must be so often interpreted by its silences? For it is impossible to say that Canterbury "speaks" the Catholic doctrine concerning the Real Presence, or Penance, or the prerogatives of Mary; the utmost that can be said is that she does not, beyond all question, explicitly deny these things; since she permits (though under protest) a few of her more recent ministers to teach them. What kind of Living Voice is that which only thus

can utter itself? The only possible explanation—which is indeed the Ritualist explanation—is that for all that it does just speak sufficiently; and that its incoherences are the necessary result of that unhappy external disunion of Christendom which all true "Catholics" equally deplore.

The supreme flaw, however, which invalidates the entire position is as follows. (It is admirably drawn out at length in W. H. Mallock's "Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption".)

All the doctrines held by Ritualists rest, *ex hypothesi*, upon the doctrine that Moscow, Rome and Canterbury together constitute the Church of Christ (exactly as in a parallel sense all the doctrines held by Catholics rest upon the doctrine that the Roman Church is the Church of Christ). The Ritualists, that is, believe in the Real Presence and in Penance, not because they are evidently deducible from Scripture (not, that is, for merely individualistic or Protestant reasons); nor from the testimony of the "Primitive" Church; nor from the witness of the Book of Common Prayer: for all these various positions are seen by the Ritualists to be as untenable as they are seen to be by Catholics. But all, for them, rests upon the assumption that the consent (under the conditions we have seen) of Rome, Moscow and Canterbury constitutes the Living Voice and that these three Communions constitute the Church of Christ. This is the fundamental assumption—the fundamental doctrine of their view of Catholicism.

Yet, when Rome, Moscow and Canterbury are severally, or unitedly, asked whether they accept this posi-

tion assigned to them in the Mystical Body, each and all repudiate it. Hence, the whole of the professed infallible teaching of these three bodies in common, rests upon an equally infallible teaching emanating from these three bodies that they do not in common constitute the Church of Christ and therefore are not infallible. It is, therefore, not a vicious circle of reasoning, but actually a self-contradictory one. (It can only mildly be paralleled by the ancient dilemma subsequent upon a man's stating that he "never speaks the truth".)

There appears at first glance to be perhaps one loophole of escape. Is it a fact, says the Ritualist, that Canterbury repudiates this theory of Catholicism? Certainly Rome does, for Rome claims to be the entire Church; as does also Moscow so far as her claim is intelligible by Western minds. But is there not a loophole left in Canterbury? The answer is, of course, obvious. Even if it can be shown (which as a matter of fact it cannot) that Canterbury teaches this theory of Catholicism—even then, since Rome and Moscow do not agree with her, it is *ex hypothesi* no more than a speculative opinion. How then is it possible to base doctrine professedly infallible upon a doctrine professedly doubtful?

Such then is the Ritualist theory—as represented by the extreme school—when examined simply on its own intrinsic contents. Many of the party in question, no doubt, never think out their theory into its component elements; they are content to take for granted a vague "Catholic" authority, represented for

them chiefly by Rome (except in certain points) and to supply the necessary suggestion of a "Living Voice" by showing a great deal of zeal in acquainting themselves with the most recent decrees of the Holy See. It is in this party that there appears from time to time considerable contempt for what are known as "mere Anglicans"—brethren of theirs, that is, who find their guidance in the Book of Common Prayer as interpreted by themselves—and even more than contempt for those of their brethren whom they name "mere Protestants"—those, that is to say, who attempt to prove their religion by a simple appeal to the Scriptures. There are, perhaps, as many fanatics found in this extreme Ritualist School as among the most convinced of the extreme Low Church party: some of them (as has been said) even going so far as to profess their full allegiance to the Vicar of Christ, and their whole-hearted belief in his infallibility. Such as these latter, however, do not usually retain their convictions very long. Either they relapse into "mere Anglicanism" of some kind or another; or they act upon their convictions, and submit in act to him whose authority they have already acknowledged in word.

But of the rest—of those who have deliberately thought out their convictions up to the point of formulating the position already described, though not to the point of facing the fallacy on which it is based—it must be said in justice that, at the present day, they are distinguished among all the parties of the Church of England for their faithful orthodoxy on most of the

fundamental doctrines of the Christian Creed, for their fearlessness in preaching them, and for their devoted and self-denying lives. It is from among these that the most devoted slum-clergy are drawn—men who live in all respects according to the true priestly and apostolic standard—and from these that the three or four Anglican "Religious Orders" of men, that can be taken seriously, are recruited. It is among these that the ideals of celibate life, of real self-sacrifice, and of unwavering faithfulness to truth, as they understand it, are sustained; and it is to these that Catholics must look to do the work from which the Church herself is so largely precluded by the prejudice and misunderstanding of the world—that is, for the gradual re-Catholicising of England.

CHAPTER V.

THE "LOW CHURCH" PARTY.

It has been seen how the main stream of activity in the Church of England runs for the most part to-day in High Church channels—such activity, that is to say, as is evident from statistics, from imposing buildings, from organizations both of life and work, and from literature of various kinds.

Yet the original tradition of Anglicanism, as it comes down apart from the Oxford Movement, is far from dead, though it is undoubtedly dying. That it is dying, as a national or popular force, may be seen from such facts as that the party possesses no journal or magazine that can be taken seriously, that its members are continually complaining of their lack of representatives upon the episcopal bench, that their activities are seldom to be seen manifesting themselves amongst the slums of the great towns, that scarcely any contributions to theology issue from their ranks, and that they scarcely possess one thinker or preacher whose name is known outside his immediate circle. Yet that it is not yet dead may be seen from the enthusiasm with which the "Church Missionary Society"—a strongly "Evangelical" body—is supported, from

the success which the party possesses as a drag upon the extravagances on the other side, and from the fact that it can still produce a few eminent men whose devotion and convictions are at any rate beyond question.

1. Their religious position may be summed up in the phrase "Established Protestantism". For, firstly, they are essentially "Protestant," and glory in the name. In their eyes Rome is not at all an "erring sister"; still less a branch of that Tree of which they, too, form a part. The Catholic Church is for them the abomination of desolation—a scheme of thought so utterly apostate from true Christianity as to have become practically the supreme enemy of the Gospel—all the more dangerous because it is clothed in the garments of religion; a scheme of thought, too, so utterly absurd, so obviously unchristian, so evidently worldly and corrupt, as scarcely to need refutation. It is pleasant, however, to observe that in recent years this judgment, while unmodified in its attitude towards the Catholic system, is becoming a little more tender towards Catholics. Some theory of "invincible ignorance," some recognition of the possible sincerity of some Catholics, and some share in the new spirit of general toleration, are perhaps responsible for this increased charity.

As a positive system, too, the party is built upon Private Judgment pure and simple. In Ireland, for example, where the Anglican Church is almost entirely of this colour of thought, and where it can be studied more easily than in England, theological discussions be-

tween ministers and people are comparatively common in the newspapers. In these discussions it is interesting to notice the wealth of Scripture that is poured out —each text being fired as a kind of shot against opponents—the positive statements made on personal grounds alone, and, above all, the tone of absolute and assumed equality between shepherds and sheep. There is not, usually, the slightest trace of any deference to human authority, beyond that which is due to one who has had more leisure and opportunity for studying the Scriptures: there is not the faintest recognition of any inherent right in the minister, as minister, to define the oracles of God. Each man has equal access to the Written Word of God—the only source of Truth;—and each man therefore has an equal right—*ceteris paribus*—to argue and deduce from those premises.

2. The positive system of belief thus deduced consists of a few absolutely orthodox statements; for the Low Church party is as little affected by modern criticism and liberalism as it is by the "Catholic revival". Down to the words in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," it may be said, as a rough kind of comment, that the Low Church belief is completely at one with the Catholic Faith. The phrase that follows, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints," is to them one article rather than two; for to them the "Catholic Church" consists of all worshippers of God united to Him by faith in Jesus Christ—emphatically an invisible, and only very secondarily, a visible body. "The Forgiveness of Sins" in their eyes has practically

nothing to do with Baptism, and still less with anything resembling in the faintest degree the Sacrament of Penance; it is, in its most emphatic aspect, the effect rather, at least in the case of adults, of a religious crisis, whether short or long in duration, known as Conversion. And with regard to the last two articles of belief, once more there is no essential difference between the Low Church party and Catholics, except in respect to belief in Purgatory—a belief utterly and entirely repudiated by the former, who hold that at the moment of death the soul passes at once to its eternal destiny.

The centre of gravity, however, of the Low Church creed, rests in the Person of Jesus Christ, with regard to whom, *on the positive side so far as it goes*, that faith is unwaveringly orthodox. On the subject of His Divinity, His Virgin Birth, the Atonement wrought by Him in the Sacrifice of the Cross, His Resurrection, Ascension, Session and Return—all is in accordance with the Faith of Christendom. It is rather on the means by which the benefits of His Life and Death are appropriated, and, above all, by which the Truth of the Christian Revelation is preserved intact and promulgated to the world, that they part company completely with Catholicism; and it is on those points that they judge the Catholic Church to be so completely apostate from the Christian Faith. (It is only the exceedingly ignorant amongst them who seriously charge Catholics with heterodoxy with respect to the Person of Christ.) It is necessary to take these points more or less in detail.

(1) Any idea of the extension of the Incarnation through the Sacramental system is completely alien to their minds. Christ instituted the Sacraments—yes (at least Baptism and Communion): but those rites are scarcely more than actions done in the visible world to denote and to signify mysterious operations of grace which are, so to speak, not more than symbolized by the ceremonies. Baptism is a kind of earnest of God's good will and Providence towards the child, an expression of His desire that all men should be saved and this one in particular; but the true "birth of the Spirit" takes place at Conversion—at that moment or period at which the soul turns consciously to Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and appropriates through faith the benefits of His Life, and still more of His Death.[1]

So too with Communion. It is an expression of the soul's faith and communion with God, as it is an expression, and even a kind of symbolical means, of Christ's communion with the soul. He is present there in a special sense, since first "two or three are gathered in His name," and second, because they are gathered there for the performance of a ceremony particularly and intimately identified by Himself with His Passion. But He is present there—as has been said by a Low Church leader, "At the Table, not upon it". In no sense are the consecrated elements

[1] Occasionally a copy of the Book of Common Prayer may be met with in which are erased the words used in the Baptismal Service after the pouring of the water, "Seeing now . . . that this child is regenerate".

His real Body and Blood, not even in the mysterious and undefined manner held by the moderate High Churchmen—they "remain" (as the "Black Rubric' states) "in their natural substances"—they are, that is mere bread and wine, yet they become the symbols and, indirectly from their use, pledges of that Body and Blood which were offered on Calvary, but exist now only at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high.

The treatment and manner, therefore, of these ceremonies, is perfectly in accordance with the belief held about them. The font is generally not used as was intended; there is placed within it a small bowl of water with which the rite is performed. Nor is there any kind of punctiliousness as to the administration of the rite; a drop or two of water, sprinkled almost casually towards the child, is considered sufficient. So too with the service of the Communion. It is celebrated often in the evening, and persons who have had their devotion stirred by the previous sermon, are begged to remain and participate. It was put forward a few years ago by a well-known leader of this party, as a plea for Evening Communion, that by celebrating the service at this time it was possible to induce people, in an access of devotion, to partake of the "Lord's Supper" who had had no previous intention of doing so. The manner of celebrating it, too, is significant. The minister stands at the north end of the Table—for reasons that will be discussed presently—robed in surplice and scarf. There are no candles used, since these savour of "Popery," unless absolutely required for the purpose of giving light; there is, generally, no

cross upon the Table, an alms-dish occasionally takes its place. (In the Irish Church the cross is categorically forbidden.) The service is then read by one or more ministers, who divide if necessary the words between them; and the bread and wine are distributed occasionally (and until recently when the bishops interfered) with the words of administration spoken not to the individual but to a whole railful at a time. The distribution is made in such a manner that crumbs fall in all directions, as may be verified by a visit to any such church on the day following a celebration of the rite, and at the close of the service the fragments left on the paten, and the remainder of the wine in the cup, are usually dealt with by the church-verger. Anything resembling ablutions by the minister is avoided deliberately, as likely to encourage a superstitious belief in the objective sanctity of the consecrated elements. There is not, in all this—or even in the custom common until the middle of the nineteenth century of throwing the fragments of the consecrated bread to the birds in the churchyard—the faintest intention of irreverence; no more than in the custom occasionally witnessed in Italy of throwing upon the floor the water that has been used for the *Lavabo*. The bread, in the eyes of such persons, has no sanctity at all; or whatever trace of sanctity it had has vanished with the fulfilment of the purpose for which it was used.

(2) A parallel line of thought is to be found in the attitude of the Low Church party towards the Sacrifice of the Cross. Just as union with Christ requires no sacramental rite for its efficacy, but is consummated

by the individual through the interior working of faith; so, too, with the Sacrifice of the Cross, there is needed no ceremony for its perpetual re-presentation before God. The Atonement was wrought once for all upon the Cross, and was "finished" there, once and for all, yet remaining always efficacious for souls who cast themselves upon its merits; and Christ remains, therefore, the one and only Priest, who needs no ministerial priesthood through whom He may act. Any idea, therefore, of a Sacrifice of the Altar is to this school of thought the supreme treason; and in no sense whatever is the Communion Service a sacrifice, except so far as men offer themselves there to be united with the Victim in Heaven, or so far as the praise and thanksgiving of the worshippers compose a kind of sacrifice. Further than this, the utmost that can be said is that the service recalls to men's minds that sacrifice wrought once and for all, by the displaying of the bread and wine that symbolize, but are not, the Broken Body and the poured out Blood.

It is to avoid the idea of sacrifice therefore that the minister stands at the north end of the Table. Rightly or wrongly, what is known as the "Eastward position" (that is the standing of the minister with his back to the people) is taken to symbolize a sacrificial attitude; and many fierce controversies and heart-burnings have been the result of indiscretion in this matter. The proper place to stand, in Low Church opinion, is at the north end of the Table, as one presiding over a feast or meal, in which there is no shadow of a sacrificial meaning, and no essential distinction made be-

tween pastor and people. Whatever priesthood there is on earth lies only in the priesthood of the people who, by the fulfilment of the Old Law in the Person of Jesus Christ, and the consummation of all sacrifices on Calvary, now enjoy direct access to the Father through the Precious Blood, and need no longer any intermediary between themselves and God. It is in virtue of this doctrine too that so intense an hostility exists in the Low Church party towards any veneration paid to Mary or the Saints—since that veneration, it is thought, necessarily implies an idea of mediatorship other than that of the Great High Priest.

(3) What has been said of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, applies even more strongly to the rite of Confirmation to which, as to the remaining four sacraments, the name "Sacrament" is strenuously refused.[1] It would seem even as if there were a certain hesitation on the part of Low Churchmen as to whether the ceremony were instituted by Christ at all; but there is no hesitation among them in denying to it the gift of any sacramental grace tied to the laying on of hands by the bishop. Its object, in their view, is merely that of the renewal of baptismal vows and the assuming, so to speak, on the part of the candidate, formally and solemnly, of the responsibility of his own soul.

Again, the Sacrament of Penance is recognized in no shape or form. The Commission to forgive sins given by our Lord to His Apostles, and thence, in a

[1] Article XXV can easily be applied by the Low Churchman in support of this view.

certain sense to His future disciples, is really nothing else than a command (accompanied by a promise of power) to preach the Gospel by which sins are forgiven; and, in the case of individual ministry, to bring home to the penitent soul, chiefly by "applying" to her Scripture promises, the assurances of forgiveness.

Holy Matrimony and Holy Order are, in the same manner, considered to be no sacraments. They are, at the utmost, solemn ceremonies, blessed by God, in which, in the one, the union of a man and woman is consecrated by Divine grace, and in the other a man is set apart for the ministry of the Gospel. In the one, again, the indissolubility of marriage is certainly not insisted upon as a doctrinal fact, however much sentiment or seemliness may urge it: in the other, anything resembling a doctrine of apostolic succession is absolutely denied. It is difficult to arrive exactly at what is held in this party concerning Episcopacy: for the most part it would seem as if it were believed to belong to the *bene esse* of the Church, especially with regard to Church government; but it is certainly not held to be of the *esse* of Christianity. It is from among this party, as much as from the "Broad Church" School, that recent demands have been made for the "exchange of pulpits" and for "Corporate Communion Services" at which Nonconformists are to communicate,[1] and although Establishment is valued very greatly, curiously enough, by this otherwise spiritually-

[1] The late Dean Stanley, in Westminster Abbey, on a well-known occasion, deliberately admitted a professed Unitarian to Communion.

minded party, it is not because Episcopal Ordination is thought to confer any grace or blessing that cannot equally well be obtained from a Nonconformist imposition of hands. Finally, Extreme Unction is of course as utterly unrecognized and repudiated as it is, indeed, in the Prayer Book itself.

3. The first important public function then of the minister is thought to be in what is very nearly considered to be the sacrament of the pulpit. It was the custom of an eminent Low Church bishop who died a few years since, to instruct his Ordination candidates to this effect, and to assure them that he had not the faintest intention in any sense of making them "priests," since there was no such thing in the Christian Church as a priesthood other than that of Jesus Christ on the one side, and of the whole faithful laity on the other. The "preaching of the Gospel" then—that is the proclamation of the Atonement through the death of Jesus Christ, and the manner in which by faith that Atonement is laid hold of by the individual soul (a manner theoretically indeed open to the charge of leading to Antinomianism)—this is the principal function of the true minister of Christ. It is the sermon then —the "preaching of the Word"—that is surrounded with the most pomp and ritual of all Church ceremonies as used by this school. Great controversies have raged in the past concerning the proper habit to be worn by the preacher; at the present day, however, although in a few churches the Genevan gown still survives, for the most part the surplice, hood, and black scarf have won their way. The sermon still remains,

however, the real point of interest; the minister mounts the pulpit with what is almost a sacerdotal air, and the congregation settles itself, Bible in hand, to verify the texts from Scripture, and to assure itself that the true Gospel is properly preached.

4. Now the claim of the Low Church party truly to represent the tradition of the Church of England, is about as good a claim (if not slightly better) as the claim of the Ritualists. It is perfectly true that their treatment of the Prayer Book seems scarcely quite fair in a few points—for instance, in their manner of explaining the certainly strong passages in which the Sacrament of Penance appears to be described—yet, their treatment of it is scarcely as much one-sided—at any rate so far as the Articles of Religion are concerned—as the Ritualist's manner of interpretation. On the other hand the Low Churchman has, as a whole, the support of history behind him. If he vehemently repudiates the "Massing-priest" with all that belongs to him, so did the Church of England with one consent during the period of the "Elizabethan settlement," and, indeed, until the Oxford Movement, practically ever since. The Ritualist may be able, with a few gaps, to trace a thread of theology similar to his own, running down the 300 years of Anglican life, but there is no question that the rest of the fabric is Puritan. The very lethargy and material irreverence universal in Georgian days, the exaltation of the pulpit, and the practically universal vulgar view, still surviving in most country places, of the parson as being primarily a man who preaches, and only in a

very secondary and doubtful sense a "priest"—all this is a witness to the fact that the Low Church party are more true to the main principles of the Establishment as conceived by its authors, and as guided by circumstances, than are their Ritualist brethren. Probably however, as has already been said, it was the intention of the Elizabethan reformers to include as many parties as possible, and if the Puritans can claim the prior and principal place, it is not necessarily to the exclusion altogether of the school represented by the Caroline and Oxford divines.

5. With regard to what would seem to be the best manner of dealing with Low Churchmen, a few observations may here be made.

(1) It must be remembered that he is usually entirely ignorant of theology as the word is used by Catholics. He has very little acquaintance with, and no respect for, the Early Fathers;[1] his one and single book is the Bible. Even the Prayer Book itself, though tolerable, is not satisfactory. It still has, here and there, to his mind, shreds of Popery embodied in its fabric. Yet he can use it, with mental reservations. Now his love of and his real acquaintance with the Scriptures have both their good and their bad points —good, because a devotion to the written Word of God must, obviously, always be good; bad, because he has already made a mental mosaic in his mind of certain texts, and interprets all the rest of the Scriptures solely with reference to them. An interesting and significant fact is that a few years ago there was

[1] There are, of course, a few exceptions to this statement.

issued by members of the Low Church party and others a "marked Testament," in which the "Evangelical texts"—that is, words bearing on the Atonement, the power of the Precious Blood, justification by faith, and the rest—were heavily underlined, whereas all texts bearing upon the institution of the Sacraments and the priesthood were severely left alone.

It is extraordinarily difficult, and rather fruitless, therefore, to argue on Scriptural grounds with the Low Churchman. He has these well-known texts, from Gospels and Epistles alike, at his fingers' ends, and can discharge them with extraordinary rapidity and accuracy of aim. And any attempt to meet them by others is useless, since these others are always held to be nullified, or rather interpreted away by those in which he himself places reliance. Neither is it of the slightest use to quote Fathers or theologians, since these, in so far as their words are significant of Catholicism, are held to be tainted with Popery.

(2) The argument then must be made to rest rather upon common sense. It may be pointed out, for instance, with advantage, that as a Rule of Faith, Private Judgment acting upon Scripture direct, would scarcely have been of avail in days before the Canon of Scripture was closed; that even in the present day this Rule of Faith is fruitful of division rather than of union, since it has produced above two hundred sects in England alone, each claiming that its own is the most perfect presentment of Christ's Gospel; and finally it may be asked what is to be made of this

professedly infallible Rule of Faith if it leads a soul—as it has led so many—to the conclusion that the Catholic Church was intended by Christ to be the sole guardian of Truth. Of course the Low Churchman has answers to all these observations; yet, if victory is to be gained, it would seem that its path must lie in this direction rather than in the bandying of texts from the Scriptures.

(3) A third point to remember is that in certain fundamental doctrines the Low Churchman is refreshingly orthodox in these days of "new thought". There can be no better foundation in fact for the building up of the full truth than that of the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement. It is true that by this party, with the exception of a few theologians, these doctrines have been most inadequately studied—it would probably be easy, that is to say, in the course of a comparatively short conversation, to entangle the average Low Churchman in a perfect net-work of his own heretical remarks; yet, on the whole his instincts are sound and orthodox; he is not heretical, in these matters, through conviction, but rather through ignorance. With regard to the rest of his beliefs, too, his errors are negative rather than positive; his negations are false, but very few of his affirmations. He denies Priesthood, not because he disbelieves in its existence, but because he thinks that any earthly derived priesthood (other than that understood vaguely by him to belong to the whole people of God) is derogatory to Christ's Supreme Office: in the same manner he believes earnestly in intercession,

but refuses to seek that of the saints in heaven, and for a similar reason. So, once more, he believes that any sacrifice on earth is derogatory to Calvary, and any belief in real Sacramental grace, to the sole Author of grace. His errors then are the result of confusion of thought and narrowness of outlook and unbalanced zeal, rather than of any positive falsehood. He is so tenacious of certain truths that he rejects others that appear to him incompatible with those he holds already: he is so certain of God's sovereignty that he suspects every man who claims to represent Him; so convinced of the value of faith that he denies that of works.

It seems then that he may best be met upon the platform of those truths which, happily, he holds in common with Catholics—though probably he would deny the fact. It is at least something that he loves God so passionately, and is so jealous for His honour, that he relies so utterly upon the power of the Precious Blood. And, if he can but be made to understand that Catholics hold, as firmly as he himself, those fundamental truths of Christianity, he may perhaps be induced to hear an account of how those other doctrines that seem to him so completely contradictory of the "Gospel," in reality illustrate and extend that "Gospel," making its power effective and real in a manner other than that of mere emotionalism and ardour of feeling. He will listen patiently and reasonably if he is but once persuaded that for the Catholic, as for himself, "Christianity is Christ".

One further point may also be noticed—viz., that

the Low Churchman, unlike the Ritualist, has but little to unlearn. He claims no "orders" that must be repudiated, no sacraments to be denied. His progress therefore into the Church is usually the more steady.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "BROAD CHURCH" PARTY.

IF it is difficult sometimes to define exactly the principles on which other parties in the Church of England take their stand, it is far more difficult in the case of the "Broad Church" School, since their very essence is, so to say, undefinibility. Where the High Church party makes a precise statement and the Low Church party contradicts it, the Broad Church deliberately leaves the question open as being at least only doubtfully essential to Christianity. A good example of this is seen in the attitude taken up by various schools of thought towards the doctrine of the Sacrament of Holy Order and the consequent need of the Episcopate. The High Churchman holds that the Episcopal office is necessary to the transmission of Orders; the Low Churchman, practically, at any rate, denies it, recognizing as the ministers of Christ men who have never received Episcopal ordination: while the Broad Churchman seeks a kind of union of the two statements by holding to the Episcopate as a "historic" fact, and therefore desirable. It is exactly in his refusal to make precise statements either affirmative or negative in his endeavour to look to "tendencies" rather than

to events, to "aspects" rather than to points, to broad surfaces rather than to defined outlines—that he is characteristic of his school.

1. His whole position then, with regard to doctrine, is of this nature; and it would be impossible therefore to give any adequate summary of his exact creed. Further, the difficulty is increased by his wish to move with the times, to avail himself, as it is said, of the new light thrown by modern thought upon the old problems, and to be, above all things, a child, if not a leader, of his age—an age which is above all things fluid and transient. Certain principles, however, he has; and it is of these principles—illustrated in certain points—that a short account should be given.

(1) To some extent he holds to an idea of progressive revelation. Certainly, he acknowledges, a new flood of light burst upon the world with the coming of Jesus Christ; but the contents of that light can only proportionately be understood as it passes through the various mediums of thought of various centuries, temperaments and civilizations. Revelation is only truly revelation so far as it is assimilated by those to whom it comes; and it is to this process of assimilation, and even of verification, that the Broad Churchman looks with particular interest. He welcomes therefore with zeal all the movements of modern criticism and affects to fear nothing from their development. Truth, he says rightly, can be no enemy to truth: if, therefore, we find that modern discovery, in whatever field, tends to modify or even overthrow principles considered hitherto established, we must

welcome their action. It may very well be that conclusions sufficient for an earlier and less well-informed age, are insufficient for our own; yet we must not fear the shifting of old boundaries and the re-stating of old doctrines, for the Spirit of Truth must ever guide us more and more into all Truth.

(2) A second characteristic of the Broad Churchman is this: that while the old "orthodox" theologian looked, so to speak, to Revelation first and to its effects on conduct second—certain that what is revealed by God must affect conduct—the Broad Churchman tends to reverse the process, and to apply to what professes to be the Revelation of God the test of its effect on conduct. Does this or that dogma—he asks himself—help me and my neighbour to live better; does it answer questions for which life demands an answer? For if not, if it is merely speculative and theoretical; it probably is not a vital part of Truth at all, but merely the result of human reasoning and deduction from insufficient premises. It is interesting to observe how this latter attitude of mind has developed from the origins of the Broad Church School—in themselves absolutely sound. It was the laudable wish of men like Charles Kingsley, Maurice, and even of Dean Stanley himself (though he went farther than his friends in the direction of heterodoxy), merely to release orthodoxy, as they thought, from the realm of barren statement and creed into that of conduct and social reform. The inevitable result—in a Church that possesses no final authority in a Living Voice—is the present Broad Churchman. Belief is not so much

released into conduct, as confined by it: dogmas which cannot be made to square with modern thoughts and needs are apt to be dismissed as "barren," and therefore untrue.

(3) The ultimate end of Broad Churchism must therefore be that system known as "Pragmatism"; that attitude towards Revelation which consists in accounting as "true"—though not necessarily as being absolutely true in themselves—all principles which help on what is thought to be the highest and widest life of the world in general. It may or may not be true, literally, that the Personality of Jesus Christ was actually Divine—Divine, that is, in a sense in which men are not and never can be divine—but if a confession of Christ's Divinity brings about good that is, at present at least, impossible without it, then let the Divinity of Christ be an article of the Christian Creed. It had better be taken as "true," in any case. This, however, is an extreme case. It would not be at all fair to accuse Broad Churchmen, as a class, of Pragmatism pure and simple. Many of them are, as a matter of fact, considerably orthodox, so far as they commit themselves to positive statements. It is only as an end to which the school appears to be moving, that Pragmatism has been mentioned at all.

2. The general attitude then, of the Broad Churchman is purposely vague and undefined. He shrinks from positive and dogmatic statements; and, so far as he commits himself to them, he is conscious, probably, of assigning a slightly different meaning to the words from that held by his High Church or Low Church brother.

He is apt to look, like the Modernist, to the "value" of the dogma, more than to its alleged objective facts. He believes, except in extreme cases, in the historical articles of the creed, which he repeats sincerely enough—he believes, for example, in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, but insists rather upon the "value" of this than upon its fact: the supremacy of Christ over death, the survival of His Spirit in the world—these are to him matters to be insisted upon, rather than upon the actually empty tomb. A few, however, of the Broad Church leaders go farther than this, and deny, in scarcely veiled language, such doctrines as that of the Resurrection, or of the Virgin Birth; and yet continue to minister in the Church of England. It need hardly be said, therefore, that, in respect to the Sacraments, the average Broad Churchman does not believe in any sense as the Catholic believes. He may insist, as he occasionally does, on the "value" of the Sacraments, and the desirability of frequenting them, since they were instituted by Christ, and tend to bring the worshipper into sympathy with Him; he may even assert, after a manner, their objectivity and "reality"; yet he does not mean by these statements that which the Catholic means. A Broad Churchman, for example, would regard as the grossest superstition, any belief that Baptism made any difference whatever to the destiny of a dying child; certainly he would baptize a dying child if opportunity offered, from a sense that the action was seemly, customary, and according, probably, to Christ's intention; but he could not bring himself to believe that its omission was

really significant. With regard to the rest of the sacraments—which he might or might not call by that name—he would take up the same attitude. He would not denounce, with the Low Churchman, the Sacrament of Penance, nor, with the High Churchman, urge it: he would think it was a useful discipline for some souls, and, on the plane on which he conceives of "reality," might even allow that absolution had an "objective" value; yet, probably, he would never make his own confession, thinking it the sign of a strong and liberated soul to be able to obtain the effects of the rite—the assurance of pardon and union with God—by other means. For his sense of sin is not acute—of sin, that is, as conceived by the Catholic to be the deliberate opposition of the human to the Divine Will; he is apt rather to picture it as the result of ignorance, or environment, or heredity. Its effects, he deplores, and its "reality" he allows: yet it is scarcely as an outrage that he thinks of it.

It is perhaps with regard to Holy Matrimony that the Broad Churchman is most characteristic of himself. Here, in the Catholic doctrine, he would say, we have an ideal, urged even by Christ Himself; but, considered in the light of modern thought, we see that it can be no more than an ideal. We cannot force upon an age that refuses discipline, an ideal which it cannot even understand. We must therefore be reasonable and charitable. Certainly it is not seemly that, after a divorce, the guilty party should be remarried with the Church's blessing—since the Church stands for an ideal, even if it cannot always command

it. But the innocent party is altogether another matter. Let us then draw the line at this point; let us re-marry the partner that has not sinned; let us urge the guilty partner not to re-marry at all; and if he insists upon it, let him go to the registry office and find his own level there. We should be unfaithful to our trust if we made any further concessions.

From this kind of argument, which is frequently used, will be seen the kind of dogmatic straits to which the Broad Churchman is brought. The "innocent party" is apparently unmarried, since a re-marriage can take place; but the "guilty party" is still bound! It is even more significant to reflect that this dilemma causes the Broad Churchman no mental discomfort.

3. It will be plain then, from the foregoing remarks, that the Broad Church party is not a dogmatic school, as are the other parties in the Church of England, It is a tendency, a point of view, a system of interpretation, far more than it is an actual group divided from other groups. And this is the more apparent when it is noticed how it has affected those who, in externals, would seem to belong to one or other of the other parties. It is becoming notorious, for example, that the High Church party, and even some of its more prominent leaders, are tending to show traces of Broad Church principles. Clergy will use, for example, Ritualistic ceremonies, will teach Sacramental doctrine in its most defined form, and yet deny the exclusive elements that, historically speaking, have always found a place hitherto in connexion with those doctrines. They will clothe their bishops in purple

and pectoral crosses, and yet advocate reunion with Nonconformists and Swedes: they will use incense, and yet desire an "exchange of pulpits". This, however, is comparatively innocent beside other innovations. They will surround the celebration of the Communion Service with full Catholic ceremonial, and yet teach—for example—that there is no security for the continued Presence of Christ in the consecrated elements if these are used for other purposes than those for which the Most Holy Sacrament was directly instituted—thus making the Sacramental Presence to depend upon a remote human purpose, rather than upon the direct intention of the celebrant in the use of Christ's own words of consecration. Or again, they will teach the Divinity of Christ on one page, and on the next the "Kenotic theory," to such an extent as to deprive that Divinity of any reality.

Even in the narrower limits of the Low Church party, the Broad Church tendency is having its effect —especially in the sphere of Biblical Criticism; and it is remarkable to notice how a body of religionists, originally taking its stand upon the Bible and the Bible only, and rejecting human tradition as liable to error, is beginning to swing in some instances, to the opposite extreme; to admit the claims of criticism which, if established, completely subvert their position —whatever effect such claims may or may not have upon the Catholic attitude—and to rely once more on that "general sense of Christendom," which, in other words, is nothing more nor less than Tradition in disguise. The only phenomenon in Protestant history

comparable to this swing of the pendulum, is that gradual movement by which Protestant Christendom, originally taking its stand upon Justification by Faith only without works, now preaches Justification by works without Faith. It was originally said that if a man had living faith, his works were unessential; it is now said that it does not matter what a man believes, so long as his life is right. This too, then, is the effect of the Broad Church movement, tending as it does to reverse Protestantism without restoring Catholicism.

4. As to the method of dealing with a Broad Churchman, nearly all must depend upon circumstances. There are, roughly speaking, two lines of approach.

(1) The first, and most obvious, consists in trying to make him think along intelligible lines—lines, that is, where statement can be met by refutation or assent or distinction—in a word, the scholastic method. If he can but be induced to enter this arena, there can be no doubt as to with whom the victory will rest. The example given above of the development of the Broad Churchman's method of thought in the instance of divorce, is a sufficient illustration of the kind of dilemma in which he must continually find himself. A further example may be found in the recent controversy among Anglicans as to the effect of the Act of Parliament legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The situation is as follows: In the authoritative table of "prohibited degrees" this marriage is denounced as against the Divine Law. Yet the law of the State now explicitly denies the

statement, and the Established Church therefore finds herself in a difficulty. The solutions offered are various. The *intransigeant* High Churchman denies the validity of the claim of the State, refuses to celebrate such unions, or to admit to Communion such persons as contract them—with the legal consequences. The scholar admits that the Church of England was wrong in her original statement, and deplores the lack of dispensing power that would make all right. But the Broad Churchman, desiring as he does to believe that the nation and the Church are more or less coincident—that the State is the nation on its secular side and the Church the nation on its ecclesiastical side—endeavours to maintain that the nation has actually corrected the Church's law, or, rather, that the Church has no law apart from the State. We find therefore a bishop, here and there, categorically directing his clergy to perform the ceremony when it is required, without waiting for Convocation to readjust the ecclesiastical code.

Now if, as has been said, it is possible to induce the Broad Churchman to formulate his principles—to translate them from "tendencies" and "aspects" into statements and arguments—some progress may be made with him. But the difficulty is to do so. In nine cases out of ten he refuses to enter the scholastic arena, since it is one of his more intelligible principles that it is exactly in this arena that religion has suffered. Religion, he thinks, is not so much a matter of statement as of "values"; he distinguishes sharply, like the Modernist, between "religion" and "the-

ology," refusing to the one any adequate relation to the other. Religion, he says, cannot, in vital matters, be reduced to arguable premises: no intellectual premise can be adequate to, or coincident with, Divine truth; and it is from the lack of perfect coincidence, from the slight *lacunæ* or errors that must creep into even the origins of theological statement, that the vastly mistaken conclusions of scholastic theologians have been drawn.

(2) An attempt therefore must occasionally be made to meet him on his own ground. Since he will not fight with recognized and tried weapons, he must be encountered with his own. It is, of course, much too large a subject to be discussed here, but it may be noticed that there at any rate has been made more than one attempt to produce Catholic apologetic of this kind.[1] We need, however, if it may be said with deference—a great deal more of this sort of work; since it would seem as if the "Broad Church" line of thought is extending itself very rapidly among all denominations. A few arguments—or rather suggestions of arguments—may perhaps be mentioned here.

(*a*) So far as the argument that conduct is the test of truth has value—and it has, of course, considerable value—it supports the Catholic claim in an absolutely startling manner. Mr. Devas works out the argument throughout his book, showing how Catholicism has been the working principle throughout the whole of the Christian era of practically everything that can be called progress or civilization. In more than one of

[1] The late Mr. Charles Devas' "The Key to the World's Progress," as well as the earlier books of Fr. Tyrrell, are admirable examples.

Mr. Chesterton's books[1]—who, though not a Catholic, writes whole-heartedly on the Catholic side—the argument is driven home, showing how with the rise of "modern thought" there has been a revival of that old pagan despair, inertia and pessimism which Catholicism and Catholicism alone succeeded in overthrowing.

(*b*) A further development of the same idea reveals the fact that Catholicism and Catholicism only passes the test of "human experience," in so far as it has succeeded, and still succeeds, in uniting the most diverse classes of minds and temperaments. If truth is judged by its wide power of appeal, it is certain that Catholicism and not "modern thought" emerges triumphant. Even the most enthusiastic modern thinkers do not claim that their system can have much success amongst the poor and the ignorant—at any rate at present; whereas Catholicism seized at once upon the uneducated, and at the same time has held and holds minds of the highest possible culture and education. So far as "human consciousness" witnesses to truth—human consciousness in its widest sense—it is to Catholicism that it points as the one religion that stands above the limitations of nationality, period and education.

(*c*) Thirdly, a religion that is to be of any working value to the average mind—and the "average mind" is even more characteristic of the human race than is the abnormal!—must emphatically not be one of mere tendencies and aspects incapable of definition. If anything is certain in psychology it is that a working religion must also be capable of being presented in

[1] "Orthodoxy," "Heretics," G. K. Chesterton.

those terms under which the ordinary mind lives and moves, however many "tendencies" and "aspects" it may present to the more analytical mind. Now it is of the very essence—and not a mere accident—of Broad Church thought, that Christianity as conceived in the modern method is incapable of precise definition; it is against precise definition that the movement is directed. How then can it be claimed by the new party that their system of thought passes the very test to which they appeal—viz., human experience and assimilation? Neither can it be retorted that Catholicism is then merely the religion of the vulgar, and that it will pass with the march of education; since it is universally recognized by Catholic theologians that the definitions of the Church by no means exhaust the contents of those truths which, at the same time, in intellectual terms they adequately describe.

Such then are two or three suggestions of arguments in the Broad Church manner, which may legitimately be used by Catholics. It is, of course, true that such reasoning is completely inconclusive to the Catholic mind, accustomed as it is to receive truth along scholastic lines, fenced and defined by irrefutable logic. Yet where the whole scholastic method is distrusted, another method is necessary if the Faith is not only to be guarded but diffused. Neither are these arguments more than three or four suggestions drawn from apologetic writers who have begun to realize the need of the new method in the present day. Our literature on this subject is confessedly imperfect and immature. It is to be hoped that with the growth of the new attack, the new defences may be developed. And it

must be remembered also that "victories" in the scholastic sense are not to be looked for in this conflict. So far as the fight is to be on modern lines, it is paralleled by the modern field of ordinary warfare. It is no longer a matter of sword against sword, with definite blows and parries exchanged hand to hand, with victories perceived, as soon as gained, in the visible flight of the enemy. It is rather an affair of heavy artillery, discharged at a distance, of large flanking movements and demonstrations—in fact of tendency against tendency, and general judgment against general judgment. The results can only gradually be gathered, as well as the fruits of the certain ultimate triumph.

NOTE.—*The Scottish Episcopalians* form an unestablished community in Scotland of a largely English character—they are known indeed commonly as the "English Church"—they are governed by bishops in Synod and are in communion with the Anglicans, though not under the jurisdiction, in any sense, of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Their history is a highly chequered one, especially in Stuart times, when the unpopularity of Archbishop Laud and his attempts to force Episcopalianism upon the whole of Scotland caused "prelacy" to be hated almost as much as "popery" itself: they were largely identified with Stuart interests, and their cause sank with the cause of Charles I.

With respect to dogma they accept the same official faith as that of Anglicanism, but have on the whole a greater tendency to be uniformly High Church and even Ritualistic. This is partly encouraged by the fact that their Prayer Book differs in certain points from the Book of Common Prayer, and approximates, especially in the Communion Service, more nearly to a

Catholic model. The definitely Low Church party has very few adherents amongst them ; but there exists a strong section whose object is to anglicise the conduct of the services, and which has met with sufficient success to establish a permissible use of the Book of Common Prayer as well as of their own liturgy. The prevalence of High Church principles on the whole, however, is shown by such things as the common use of the cope and mitre by a majority of the bishops, and the permission, under safeguards, to reserve the sacrament in a tabernacle. They have produced several divines eminent for learning as well as for piety.

On the whole, therefore, it may be said that the Episcopalians, at any rate in recent times, have a very creditable record. They are a small, rather aristocratically inclined body, whose influence upon Scotland as a whole is practically negligible, but whose sincerity, zeal and refinement of both learning and piety are beyond question. They claim, of course, to represent the ancient Catholic Church of Scotland ; but their claim, unsupported as it is by the prestige of Establishment or of the possession of the ancient buildings and revenues, can hardly be said to be taken seriously by anyone but themselves and their High Church Anglican sympathizers.

The "*Church of Ireland*," now disestablished, consists of Irish Protestants who, to the distress of the Ritualist, are in full communion with the Church of England. They too, like the Scottish Episcopalians, are not in any way under the jurisdiction of Canterbury, but are governed by their own bishops, and further possess a Prayer Book on the lines of the Book of Common Prayer, but considerably altered in a markedly Protestant direction. All mention of absolution, for instance, is carefully omitted, and by their Canons their ritual is severely restricted.

PART II.

THE NON-EPISCOPAL SECTS.

CHAPTER I.

PRESBYTERIANISM.

THE first "General Assembly" of "the Reformed Church of Scotland" met in 1560, shaped and inspired by the violent genius of John Knox, the apostate priest. Since those days the history of Presbyterianism has plunged into a maze of intricacy and complications, which there would be no use in attempting to disentangle from the historical point of view; yet, on the whole, it may be said that, at least until recently, the almost countless divisions in organization have had little or nothing to do with doctrinal differences. The dogmatic scheme of Presbyterianism has survived, very much on its original lines, in spite of the numerous breaches in communion that have developed, and are still open to development, on comparatively secondary matters.

At the present day there are five Presbyterian bodies that may be said to represent between them the general tradition of reformed Scottish religion.

(1) *The Established Church.*—This body, historically speaking, may be described as the most direct descendant of the original stock and in no way can be described as "Nonconformist". It is as old, practically speaking, as the Church of England, and in many ways resembles it. Its main divergence, however, in doctrine lies in its acceptance of presbyteral, instead of episcopal, succession and government. Politically, too, it occupies a parallel position to that of the Church of England, united as it is with the State, as the official Church. Its ministers occupy recognized positions, secured to them by the direct sanction of law; and from their number are selected chaplains to the Sovereign, with definite duties towards him when he is resident in Scotland.

(2) *The Original Seceders*, the representatives of the old *Covenanters*, form an incredibly tiny body, yet surrounded by great historical interest. In spite of their small numbers they possess a complete and elaborate organization as intricate as that of any of the larger bodies.

(3) The *United Free Church of Scotland*, composed as it is at present of several bodies that have united in one, including one comparatively ancient stock, stands for the principle of freedom from the State, especially in the reconstruction of formularies and the conduct of "Church Courts" and the liberty of the congregation to appoint its own minister without external interference. It is this body that is on the whole most before the world, owing to its theological and literary activity, and its endeavour to keep abreast of the move-

ment of the times. The Established Church on the other hand, while enjoying official prestige, has been distinguished rather for its external organization and its social and parochial activity, than for its theologians and thinkers. It is the "*United Free*," too, which has been most affected by modern thought, and which, while at present impervious to the "New Theology,' contains distinguished leaders—particularly among the younger men—who desire to see it representative of various schools of thought, from the old Calvinism to the modern "Broad Church" point of view.

(4) The *Free Presbyterians*, and (5) the *Free Church* have their strongholds in the conservative Highlands, and stand for that more or less absolute Calvinism with which the Presbyterian movement began, and on which it is officially founded. A good idea of their precise and somewhat narrow theology may be gained from such a book as Hodge's "Outlines of Theology".

2. It has been already remarked that there is little or no difference between the doctrinal positions of these various bodies. The "Westminster Confession" is at present the basis of the entire Presbyterian creed, and this Confession is distinctly Calvinistic in its essence. Yet, while Calvinism is the foundation, there are various senses in which this is interpreted. The "Free Presbyterians" and the "Free Church," for example, adhere to it more or less in its literal sense; the "United Free" interpret it more liberally, and can scarcely be said to pledge themselves to every statement in the "Westminster Confession" in its plain and original meaning; they assent to it rather in the

same manner in which most Anglicans interpret the Thirty-nine Articles, as containing the essence of the truth and its general outline only. An example perhaps of that which is most characteristic in Calvinism —viz., the dogma concerning Predestination—may illustrate the position.

Calvin taught that God's predestination of souls to eternal life is of such a character that the will of the individual is a negligible quantity. The eternal decrees are such as depend in no degree at all upon human effort. Those predestined to glory pass at some time in their earthly existence from death to life by what is known as "Justification" and, in spite of backsliding, are assured in the grace of final perseverance. Those predestined to eternal death are not so much predestined as simply left to themselves; and since, by original sin, man's nature is totally depraved no religious effort or emotion of these can be more than transient. Further, as held by the extreme Calvinists in Scotland, this predestination does not in any degree arise from God's foreknowledge of men's lives: He does not foreordain because He foreknows—this is dismissed as mere Arminianism—He foreknows because He has foreordained.

Many Presbyterians, however, do not hold this theory in its bare simplicity. They prefer, as do Catholics to regard the mysteries of the relations between will and grace as a mystery, and to leave it there, assured that no man can lose his soul except by his own fault. "We are all Calvinists when we pray: we are all Arminians when we work."

While Calvinism, therefore, is the official foundation of the Presbyterian creed, it would not be fair to assume that all Presbyterians are simply Calvinists.

3. It is necessary, however, to pass on and consider the Presbyterian creed as a whole.

(1) On the fundamental doctrines of the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation, the Person of Christ, His Prophetic Office, His Sovereignty, and His Priesthood, the Presbyterian creed is practically orthodox. "Modernism" in its definitely dogmatic aspect has found no opening in Scotland. It may be said, indeed, that the Presbyterian teaching *de Deo* is profoundly reverent and Christian; and its reliance on Christ as the Divine Redeemer of the world is equally admirable. Practically all the intense hatred of Catholicism, so evident in the writings of the more precise and conservative school, arises from a conviction that certain Catholic doctrines, especially those concerning the priesthood, the Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the treasury of merits and the intercession of Saints, derogate from the supreme and unique dignity of Christ. It is astonishing how great is this hatred and distrust of Catholicism. In the ordinary dogmatic treatises used by students for the ministry, very nearly as much space is given to the denunciation of "Romish" and "Popish errors" as to the setting forth of positive doctrines. In Dr. Hodge's book, for example, already referred to, most questions are treated under three heads—the Romish, Lutheran and the "Reformed" doctrine; the first is usually dismissed as absurd or blasphemous; the second as mistaken; and

the third expounded as orthodox and Scriptural. A very different spirit, however, is beginning to prevail; and, although, officially, the Catholic Church is still regarded, especially in the more conservative bodies, as the supreme enemy of pure religion, among the younger men a very surprising and pleasant sympathy is beginning to manifest itself.

(2) The Rule of Faith of the Presbyterian is the Bible and the Bible only. Tradition is entirely rejected as liable to corruption, and the sole fount of truth is to be found, it is claimed, in the written Word of God in which are all things necessary to be believed for salvation. It is the object of all theologians, all Church courts dealing with heresy, and even of the laymen, to determine, Bible in hand, by the help of the "witness of the spirit"—that is "the religious sense of the prayerful man"—as to whether this or that doctrine can be "proved" or not, in so many words, from the sacred Scriptures. Yet this is not "Private Judgment" pure and simple. While traditional interpretations in the past are rejected, while there is not, as among Anglicans, any appeal to the "Primitive Christianity" of the first few centuries as the final judge of the meaning of the Scriptures, or to any Prayer Book—still less to any sense of the "Church" throughout the world—yet for all that a body of divinity has come into being, incorporated more or less in the Westminster Confession (which is assumed to be the true summary of Scripture) by which judgments are passed. Further, the Church courts supply the place of a Living Voice, by which

those standards of doctrine are applied; and heresy-trials are therefore a real though now a very infrequent feature of Presbyterian life. Theoretically, of course, the system cannot stand for an instant, since no infallibility is claimed by those courts or this tradition, and, as has been already pointed out, a written infallible Revelation deprived of a living infallible witness, ceases to be infallible. Yet, practically, Presbyterianism is a living, working and authoritative system, with a clear mind of its own, and a refreshing courageousness in proclaiming it. There is little or none of the Anglican instinct to sacrifice truth to peace.

All then is built professedly upon the Scriptures, and, accordingly, a great deal of sound orthodoxy is the result.

(3) The Presbyterian doctrine "*de ecclesia*" is a little hard to determine. It is not defined at all in the "Shorter Catechism," any more than in the Anglican Catechism; yet that "the Church" is believed to be one and visible is plain from the "Confession of Faith". The visible Church universal is there declared to consist of "all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children, and (to be) the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation". Yet, no more than in the Anglican Catechism, are there any further precise marks by which it may be identified, no verifiable test of communion, no absolute final authority to which the will must submit. This "phenomenal" Church is also carefully distinguished in Presbyterian theology from

the "true spiritual Church" (or, in Catholic phraseology, the Communion of Saints).

Theoretically, then, the doctrine is unsatisfactory; and probably varying answers would be given, according to the liberality of those questioned, as to which, if any, Christian bodies organized on other than Presbyterian lines formed part of this "visible Church". Certainly the Anglicans (or "Episcopalians") are so recognized. Their laity are received to communion without any renunciation being demanded from them, and their ministers to the Presbyterian ministry without reordination. Similar concessions have been frequently made on the Anglican side; the most famous of which perhaps is that in the case of Hooker, a very eminent Anglican divine, who on his deathbed made his confession to Saravia whose orders were Presbyterian. It is common, too, that Anglican bishops, clergy and laity should in Scotland attend Presbyterian services; and the King is, constitutionally, an Anglican in England, and a Presbyterian in Scotland. All this is, however, fiercely deplored by the Anglican High Churchmen.

Practically, then, the doctrine seems to amount to this—that the visible Church of Christ throughout the world consists of those bodies living in external communions organized on broad lines for Christian worship; Protestants generally, who hold in the main the fundamental doctrines of the Apostles' Creed, come under this category; Catholics, owing to the corrupt and blasphemous version of the truth held by them, do not. Such seems to be the view of the narrower

Presbyterian, for whom, of course, his own Church appears to be the most Scriptural and correct.

(4) The Presbyterian doctrine as regards the ministry is, on its negative side, clear enough. There is nothing, it is held, in the Church of Christ that can be in any sense called sacerdotalism. There is but one Priest, Jesus Christ, whose priesthood so far as it is represented on earth, is extended to all believers equally.[1] There is no sacrifice, save the Sacrifice of the Cross, finished once for all; no earthly altar, and no earthly priest.

On the positive side the doctrine is more difficult to determine. Certainly there is a great reverence for the ministry, and a deep appreciation of the value of a certain kind of historical descent, even to such a degree as to the admiration of the "historic Episcopate," though coupled with a denial of its Scriptural origin. Ordination is a grave and solemn ceremony, during which the hands of all ministers present are laid upon the head of the candidate. Further, it is believed, at least by many, that ordination is a definite act of God conferring something resembling even the "character" of Holy Order itself. Yet it is utterly denied that supernatural powers are so conferred, beyond, perhaps, such as result from the blessing of God upon the natural powers of His chosen minister. There is nothing, in a word, done by a minister in the fulfilment of his office which a layman, in case of need, could not also do. The solution of these apparent contradictions seems to lie in the belief that such powers as Christ has transmitted to men are held all together

[1] Cf. "Low Churchmen," p. 67.

by the "Church," who appoints persons to act for her and exercise those powers. Normally, they are so exercised by ministers, consecrated and set apart: in extreme cases they can be used effectively by any person acting as her representative. In spite, then, of the reverence for the ministry and the value placed upon the historical descent through the "presbytery" to each minister—a descent that is undoubtedly historical from Reformation days—no doctrine is held approximating to that of Apostolical Succession, or to that of the supernatural powers and character conferred upon the priest.

(5) As regards the relations of the individual soul to God, and the means by which grace is received, it may be said, in a word, that Justification by faith only, at the time of conversion, is the official doctrine of the Presbyterians; this "forensic" external act is invariably accompanied by "Regeneration," an internal change wrought in the soul. Sanctification is sharply distinguished from the two as the process by which, after the soul has "embraced Christ," and had His merits "imputed" to herself and become "regenerate,"[1] she is led on in the path of holiness towards perfection. Strictly speaking, the Calvinistic doctrine of Justification, no less than that of Predestination, gives an opening immediately to Antinomianism. If it be true that the elect soul, who has once "embraced Christ," has His merits "imputed" to her, in such a sense as that she

[1] "A judicial act of God, declaring the believer to be forensically just, on the ground of the righteousness of Christ made his by imputation" ("Outlines of Theol."; cf. pp. 496-512).

is counted by God as completely clothed by Christ's Righteousness whatever her sins may be—and that that "Justification" is a final and irreversible Divine act—the conclusion is inevitable that she need no longer observe the moral law. Even from the point of view of personal immunity from punishment she need have no grave fears, since at death, it is believed, the process of sanctification is completed instantaneously, and she passes at once to the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision. Yet, practically, except in cases of tremendous religious excitement—when, for instance, the believer is induced by imagination and memory to rest merely upon the past emotional crisis through which "Justification" was consummated—Antinomianism does not exist. While "works" have no part in the process of "Justification," yet they are believed to be the practically necessary consequence of it. Sanctification, in common judgment, is the soundest test as to whether the "Justification" was real and final, and is the normal and usual process following upon conversion.

This process, then, is carried on by God's grace given through Jesus Christ, and comes to the soul in many ways, although always directly from Christ without any intermediary. Preaching is an occasion of this grace's coming (as it may also be an occasion of Justification, Regeneration and the whole State of Adoption which is the simultaneous result); so is prayer; so are Bible-reading and the sacraments. Yet none of these ordinances are necessary to salvation, though they cannot be neglected without risk, since they are

the divinely appointed occasions—rather than real channels—of grace. All that can be obtained through them, can be obtained without them, by the direct access of the soul to Christ.

Baptism, then, and the *Lord's Supper* are believed to be ordinances of Christ "wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers".[1] Further they "become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them, but only from the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them".[1]

Now this is Protestantism pure and simple. There is nothing here of the suggestion of Catholic doctrine contained in the Anglican Catechism. The sacraments "seal and signify," but they do not convey the actualities for which they stand: they are means of grace—but not in themselves; they are rather the occasions concerning which Christ has revealed that upon their performance He will act directly upon the soul through His own Divine Power. "They convey the grace they signify to those for whom that grace is intended, and who are in a proper spiritual state to receive it, 'as a key conveys admission, a deed an estate'."[2] In a word, the doctrine amounts to Virtualism. Let that be applied to the sacraments in particular.

(1) *Baptism* administered usually by sprinkling only,

[1] Shorter Catechism.

[2] "Outlines of Theology," p. 592, edit. 1896.

with the words "I baptise thee into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," is given either to adults who manifest faith, or to the children of faithful parents, on those parents' faith. Sponsors are not accepted in their stead, except where parents are unavailable or evidently unsuitable. Now Presbyterians do not hold that the action of Baptism confers regeneration, or justification, or adoption. It is rather the "seal," the sign given in the external world of God's relation to souls, and, it is to be hoped, to this soul in particular. Only time, however, can show whether such a soul is in the favour of God or not.

(2) *The Lord's Supper*, of which the ceremonial will be described presently, is in like manner administered only to the faithful—to those, that is, who are recognized as having given evidences of justification and faith. It is not believed that there is any real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood—yet, at the same time, "the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace".[1] There is, then, it is said, a certain "influence" received in the Sacrament from Christ's Human Nature, existing, as it does, only on the Right Hand of the Father; yet this is "mystical, not physical," and is conditioned by the faith of the recipient.

Of other Sacraments in the Presbyterian system of thought there are none. Penance is only represented so far as may be by the admission to and exclusion

[1] Shorter Catechism.

from Church membership—a custom that once meant a considerable ordeal to the applicant, required as he was to answer searching questions concerning his own spiritual state. And this occasionally involved a public confession and a formal rebuke of sin, as has been customary from time to time in certain other Protestant bodies. Matrimony is not regarded as a Sacrament, nor is there the smallest objection to the re-marriage of divorced persons in the lifetime of their respective partners. Signs of penitence, however, would be required from the "guilty" party before the blessing of the Church would be granted. The theology of the matter, however, is not formulated officially; and it may be said that the state of matrimony is regarded as a mere contract, permitted and blessed by God, yet under the jurisdiction of the civil rather than of the ecclesiastical power. Confirmation is unrecognized as having been instituted by Christ: Extreme Unction exists in no shape or form.

4. Such then, roughly stated in outline, is the Presbyterian Creed so far as it is officially promulgated. It is characterized by its marked Protestantism, consisting as it does of a scheme of thought, presented almost scholastically, concerning the relations of the individual soul to God, secondary to which come the ordinances and the rites of the Church, the ministry and the Church itself. Preaching, therefore, as in the case of the Low Church party among the Anglicans, is, so to speak, the main "Ministry of the Gospel," for by preaching the faithful are instructed in the very elaborate scheme of redemption—the eternal covenant

by which the sins of men are "imputed" to Christ, and the merits of Christ to the sinner—an elaborate scheme in which "Justification" is the first step, accompanied by "Regeneration," Adoption is the net result, and "Sanctification" the ensuing process: by preaching again the "justified" are encouraged and led on in the path of holiness. All sacraments, ceremonies and rites, then, are secondary to this; they "signify and seal" the effects of the interior process rather than themselves effect them.

5. Of the ceremonial of the Presbyterians it is difficult to give an exact account, since there is no official book directing this. It is a matter of custom rather than of rule; and such ceremonial as is used is as simple and unofficial as possible.

The dress of the minister on all public occasions, in preaching as well as in the administration of the sacraments, consists of cassock, Geneva gown, bands, and occasionally the University hood. The furniture of the church consists of pews, centring towards the pulpit, which occupies the place of honour, and from which the service is mainly conducted. Only in the case of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, and in the actual performance of Baptism does the minister descend. The Communion table is a movable structure, often of magnificently carved wood, unadorned by anything except occasionally flowers, either standing in front of the pulpit, or moved in when need requires. The Communion is celebrated four times in the year, after the morning service, and, in town churches at any rate, is usually repeated again in the afternoon,

for the benefit of those who cannot attend in the morning.

An account of the kind of ceremonial used, and the order of service employed may perhaps be given with advantage. Details vary in various churches; the minister is in no way bound to one method rather than another; yet the tendency is to follow some such plan as the following.

The ordinary morning service, lasting an hour and a half, begins with a sentence or two of Holy Scripture, such as those prescribed in the Anglican Prayer Book, invoking the presence and blessing of God. This is followed by a paraphrased psalm in rhyme, sung by the whole congregation standing. In nearly all churches at the present time an organ is used, although in the Highlands there is still a strong prejudice against the use of any instrument in divine service. The prayer then offered by the minister is practically always extempore, but it is generally prepared beforehand, and includes acts of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and petition. The people sit for prayer, leaning forward only during its recital. After another "paraphrase" a piece of Scripture is read by the minister; occasionally two are read, following the Anglican custom of the two lessons, one from each Testament. This reading is sometimes followed by a simple address to the children that are present; and some idea is given to these of the lines on which the sermon will presently be delivered. A hymn is then sung, followed by further prayer, usually of an intercessory character, which is again followed by the giving

out of Church notices, and the collection of alms, during which a voluntary is played upon the organ. The sermon is then preached, lasting about half an hour; and the service is brought to a conclusion by another short prayer, a hymn, and the benediction.

The celebration of the Lord's Supper which, as has been said, four times in the year follows the morning service, is of the same simple and informal character. This, too, is almost entirely directed at the discretion of the minister; but this too tends to follow certain customary lines. A typical description may be given as follows.

The Communion Table is placed ready beneath the pulpit, covered with a white cloth, as are all the fronts of the pews in which the intending communicants are seated. (This custom is without doubt a survival of the "houselling cloth" still in use among Catholics.) Upon the Table stand two large silver plates containing each a loaf, from which the crust has been removed, cut into slices, rearranged again in loaf form; and tall silver Communion cups filled with ordinary port-wine. (In a few churches unfermented "wine" is used in deference to temperance principles; and in yet fewer small glasses, one for each communicant, are substituted for the cups. This last, however, is a complete innovation and has made very little way.) These loaves are at the beginning of the service themselves veiled in white cloths.

The service begins by the delivery of an exhortation by the minister, standing at the Table, facing the people over it. It is interesting to observe that this address

is sometimes a compilation from ancient liturgies as well as of Scriptural passages. Towards the close of the exhortation occasionally read from a manuscript book, the minister taking a portion of the bread into his hands, begins to recite the passage corresponding to the *Qui pridie* in the Mass. At the words "He gave thanks," an extempore thanksgiving is offered, and the bread replaced. There follows the almost ceremonial breaking of the bread, and the recital of the words: "This is My body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

There follows the distribution of the bread, first to the assistant ministers and the elders, and then, by the hands of the elders to the people. Each communicant sitting in his place breaks off and puts into his own mouth a small fragment of one of the slices. When this is done the minister taking up one of the cups recites the passage corresponding to the *Postquam cœnatum est*, and repeats as before the corresponding words for the blessing, "This is My Blood which is shed for you. Do this as often as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me," with some such addition as "forasmuch as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come". Occasionally even the *Domine non sum dignus*, practically translated word for word from the missal, is introduced somewhere into the devotions before Communion. Then after the cups have been handed round in the same manner as the bread, the service is ended by a short devotional address, a hymn and the benediction.

6. Such is the type of service customary among all the Presbyterian denominations, though following precedent, rather than being prescribed by any fixed tradition, still less a rule. A certain amount of latitude therefore is open to the minister; and in this connexion a few observations must be made.

In recent years Presbyterianism has seen to a slight extent the growth and development of a movement corresponding in some degree to that of the Tractarian revival in England. It has not yet reached considerable dimensions, and it is doubtful as to whether it will ever do so. Its adherents, though numbering among them, perhaps, half a dozen well-known names, have scarcely yet reached the dignity of a "school of thought," and certainly have not yet, as a whole, affected their brethren very deeply. It is not, therefore, necessary to describe their tenets in detail; and yet it may be as well to indicate shortly in what direction they are moving.

The direction is, without doubt, Tractarian. It is an attempt to claim a real continuity with the Pre-Reformation Church, to identify the ministry with the Catholic priesthood in essentials, to teach some kind of sacrificial doctrine connected with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and real sacramental doctrine in reference both to that rite and to that of Baptism. There has, too, been more than one case before the Church courts with regard to ceremonial, in one instance involving a charge against a minister of having sought to suggest that the Communion Table was in effect an "altar," by the placing of a cross upon it at

the time of administration. One minister, too, at least, went so far as to begin to instruct his people on the subject of the intercession of saints and the value of prayers for the dead. At the same time, while such teachers repudiate the necessity of Episcopacy for the transmission of Orders, they teach a real "Apostolical Succession" through the "laying on of the hands of the presbytery," and claim historical precedent for this doctrine in the case of the Catholics at Alexandria, with regard to whom it is certainly difficult to demonstrate that distinction of the Episcopate and the priesthood now held by the Church.

It is extraordinarily interesting that such a movement as this should be possible among those whose Protestantism is of such a clear and unwavering type. Among the Anglicans, while it is true that from the days of Queen Anne down to the Tractarian revival the outward ceremonial and current doctrine resembled very closely that of the Presbyterians, there was at least the implicit, though disregarded, witness in the Prayer Book to a certain thin thread of Catholic doctrine. It is not so surprising therefore that a "Catholic revival" should at some period among the Anglicans make itself felt. But that it should be possible among the Presbyterians, whose system, originally founded upon the Calvinistic Westminster Confession, has been handed down since by a tradition unwaveringly Protestant and anti-prelatical, is a startling phenomenon. It points to the fact that even in the most rigidly anti-Catholic community—such as was that of the Scottish bodies—it is possible for principles to survive, though

unspoken, and even verbally repudiated, which in more liberal and genial times can bear unexpected fruit.

7. So far the account that has been given of Presbyterianism has been systematic, doctrinal and ceremonial, rather than descriptive. It may be as well to approach the matter now rather from the outside, and to make a few general remarks upon the main character of Scottish religion.

(1) Its dogmatic system is a scheme of thought rising from, and supported by, the head rather than the heart. It is, like all systems that base their roots in Calvinism, severely logical and argumentative. The relations between God and the soul are legal in character, rather than filial. The system of salvation is represented in the older text-books, at least, as a strict covenant instituted between God and man, with conditions, grounds, qualifying clauses and even "legal fictions". And although all this leads to what are called "filial" relations between God and man, although the New Covenant is wholly gratuitous on God's part, arising from His willingness to "impute" to His Son the sins of men who accept the Covenant; yet even those who accept it do so from the force of the Eternal Decrees rather than from that of grace acting upon a will that freely corresponds with it. There is a certain appearance of grudgingness and severe justice, even upon the face of God's mercy.

(2) Two results to character inevitably follow, so far as the old spirit of Presbyterianism still holds ground. First, the Presbyterian lies terribly open to

the assaults of scrupulousness. In times of spiritual darkness there is always the gaunt possibility present to his mind that he has been mistaken as to his own election. There are no external acts of God through the sacramental system open for his consolation. He cannot, by a fervent and sincere confession, for example, met by the grace of absolution, cast himself once more upon the mercy of God, and satisfy himself that he is in the enjoyment of God's favour.

Secondly, such a system of thought tends to make its adherents, without distinction, amateur theologians. Since so much depends upon the exact conditions of God's Covenant, it is above all things necessary to be accurately acquainted with these conditions. "Implicit faith" in the sense of faith in a Divine authority and, consequently in all that that Authority teaches, is rejected as unworthy of intelligent beings. Such, it is said, is no faith at all, since faith must rest on knowledge. The psychological result therefore is certain: there is the danger, on the one side, of scrupulousness, and on the other of a mere head-religion. If so much depends on precise conditions, and on the knowledge of them on the part of those who would benefit by them, either the professor tends to be too anxious about them, or he tends to rely too much on his technical knowledge. Scrupulousness and laxity are of course dangers common to all Christians; but it would seem as if the Presbyterian—as indeed history seems to show—has lain peculiarly open to them. The recent change, however, that has passed over the Presbyterian religion, has tended greatly to modify

these dangers, and to substitute for them, as elsewhere, a kind of sentimental optimism.

(3) Such, however, as can keep their balance are, of course, in one sense, fine and self-controlled characters. Presbyterianism has a real dignity about it, owing to its realization of the Sovereign Majesty of God, the doctrine of which is so intimately connected with the foundations of the faith. It is, in this sense, a refreshing contrast to certain other Protestant schools of thought, in which a vague benevolence is substituted for the Love and Justice of God, and an incoherent Universalism for the Eternal decrees. A very real and solid piety therefore—rising from this deep reverence towards the Creator as well as from an intimate personal relation with the Divine Redeemer—is distinctly characteristic of Presbyterianism at its best. There are a few outstanding books of Presbyterian devotion, to which so far as regards a love of the Sacred Humanity and a sense of the creature's absolute dependence and reliance upon the Creator, it would be difficult to find parallels outside Catholic literature.

(4) Such well-hammered systems as this, must, of course, produce a by-product of superstition, and Presbyterianism is no exception. These superstitions are to be found centring chiefly round the observance of Sunday, which has been transferred, it would seem almost bodily from the worst days of the Pharisaic traditions of the Sabbath. The "Shorter Catechism" sums up in a manner appalling to the imagination the ideal Presbyterian "Lord's Day".

"The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting

all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days ; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy."

Other superstitions, among the more precise congregations, may be found in indifferent matters of religious etiquette, and in the endeavour to dispense, ritually, with ritual.

(5) Finally, it must be remembered that to a very large extent, "liberalism" is at last beginning to prevail among Presbyterians, especially in the denomination known as the "United Free Church of Scotland". It is difficult to say exactly how far this has extended in the past, or how far it will extend in the future. It concerns, firstly, the dogmatic ideas on which Presbyterianism was originally founded, modifying it now to such a degree that a practical Arminianism rather than a dogmatic Calvinism is the prevailing complexion of the thought of the younger men ; and secondly, the whole subject of Biblical Criticism. The works of the various German schools are freely studied, and their conclusions taught ; and, unless the teachers can somehow manage to link themselves on to some living Christian tradition—either to the Catholic tradition itself or to some new line of thought such as is being gradually evolved by the Broad Church party in England—it is difficult to see what authoritative Rule of Faith will ultimately remain as the foundation of belief. Liberalism, however, has not yet among the Presbyterians even begun to approach the teachings of the

"New Theology," whose professors indeed are looked down upon by the more solid students of Presbyterian theology, as mere innovators and amateurs.

It is not necessary to make many remarks, in addition to the foregoing, on the manner in which Presbyterians may be best approached by Catholics, for, except in the case of individuals, anything like a movement on the part of Presbyterians towards the Church, is at present inconceivable. It may seem strange, but it would appear, at least on the surface, as if in the spread of "liberalism" among those communities, especially as regards the Sacred Scriptures, lies the best hope of Catholicism. If it can but be perceived that the Scriptures, though inspired, cannot, from their very structure and the circumstances of their composition, have been intended by God as a complete and accessible statement of Revelation, it may be hoped that the living and vital tradition of the Catholic Church, including the inspiration of the Scriptures so far as that has been defined, may occur to many minds as at least affording a possibility in the direction of a final Rule of Faith.

In the meanwhile a few suggestions may be made with regard to dealing with individuals.

(1) It must be remembered that the Presbyterian is, characteristically, a man of thought and reflection. The metaphysically inclined Scottish character has been developed through three centuries by a system of belief that at least demands theological thinking. The Scotsman, so far as he retains the impress of his

old religion, is precise, logical, meditative and well informed.

(2) It must be remembered that the Presbyterian is rigidly orthodox as regards the Being and the attributes of God, the Divinity of our Lord, and the Person, and (within limits) the Office of God the Holy Ghost. He has further, as has been said, a strongly developed sense of the Sovereignty of God, and a capacity therefore for a real and deep spiritual humility. Yet he may be, simultaneously, intellectually proud.

(3) Up to a certain point he is rigidly orthodox as regards the Atonement, the Sacrifice of the Cross, and the power of the Precious Blood. It is in the application of the graces flowing from the Death of Christ, especially through the Sacraments, that he goes utterly astray. It is not so much positively, as negatively, that he is at fault. A certain amount of his theology concerning the direct action of grace upon the soul—(and regarded by the Catholic as given by God through such means as the "Baptism of desire," and "spiritual communion")—is also orthodox. It is rather in his ignorance of the sacraments than in his positive assertions about grace that he is at fault. Even in respect to his doctrine of "Justification by Faith" he is not so completely astray as might appear at first sight; for, while technically and dogmatically heretical, he yet is apt practically so to regard works as the necessary accompaniment of saving faith as very nearly to satisfy the Catholic dogma. As regards the Church his beliefs bear very little resemblance at all, even considered as merely parallel to the Catholic faith. For him, as for

the Anglican Low Churchman, the "Church" is the result of the incorporation of individuals, rather than the Mother of whom souls are born, and to whom they look for light and grace.

(4) Finally, then, the Presbyterian should be treated with real respect. He has a system, logical and well digested so far as it goes, and almost scholastic in its presentment. He is usually well acquainted with his faith, and capable of defending it. It is built upon foundations taken from the Scriptures. It is very far removed indeed from the loose and incoherent systems of more modern days, and it produces admirable results, so far as it goes, of conscientiousness and solid piety. His anti-Catholic bias, amounting even to violence of language redolent of the sixteenth century, arises almost wholly from the tradition of his fathers, and is built chiefly upon a complete misapprehension of the Catholic Church and her doctrines. And even that bias is, apparently, beginning to dissolve.

CHAPTER II.

THE "NONCONFORMISTS".

Nonconformity in General.

Nonconformity, as has already been stated, is the result of nothing else but of the national principle in religion pushed a little farther upon perfectly logical lines. The Anglican reformers never indeed contemplated it; and there was as much indignation in the sixteenth century at the rise of the "Independents" as against the "recusancy" of Catholics. Yet the Independent's answer is complete. If it is permitted for a nation to assert its individual religious rights against the union of nations hitherto known as Catholicism; it is as legitimate for a group to assert its individual rights against the union of groups only recently known as Anglicanism. It is of no weight for the Anglican to answer that he has not intentionally separated himself from the vital essence of the Catholic Church, but only from the unwarranted usurpations of particular authorities in that Church; for the Nonconformist can parallel it immediately in his own answer to Nationalism. If the Anglican objects to papal authority as a usurpation, the Nationalist objects equally to State authority. The true Church

of Jesus Christ is, on the confession of the Nationalist, not a matter of external, existing discipline, but is fenced by principles deeper than this: it is to those same principles, or, at least, to similar ones, that the Independent appeals.

When once, however, it had come to be believed that a Church of Christ hitherto visibly one need no longer be so—when once Nationalism in religion had driven the first breach in the walls of this hitherto universally accepted theory, and "Independence" had deepened it, it was a mere matter of time before absolute individualism—or pure Protestantism—was reached. If nations can separate themselves from external obedience to Rome and yet claim an invisible union with the "Catholic Church"; if independent groups can separate themselves from this "Catholic Church" and yet claim an invisible union with the "Christian Church"; individuals can also separate themselves from the "Christian Church" and yet claim an invisible union with "Christ". Thus there vanished largely from England any idea of a Divine Society through which the individual is sanctified, and there was substituted for it the theory that the individual, so to speak, comes first and the Society second—in fact, that it is the individual that sanctifies the Society; for the doctrine of the Invisible Church is nothing other in effect than this. Individualism became, therefore the fabric, so to speak, of average English religion—a fabric on which, later, discipline, Church government and the rest, became embroidered. Hence we see with extreme clearness the ordinary

religious theory of the present day, to the effect that the sincerity of the individual is his only necessary virtue; the consequent loss of all sense of the value of objective truth, and the final development of the so-called supremely "Christian virtue" of tolerance.

2. Yet, while Individualism in religion became the reigning idea, there was always necessary some accepted treasury of Revelation from which the individual might draw for his needs. Tradition was gone; since Tradition pointed unmistakably to Rome, and Rome had been repudiated—there remained only the Bible. It was upon the Bible that the Reformers rested,[1] it was to the Bible that the Independents appealed against the Reformers; and it was to the Bible finally that the Individualist turned to select those dogmas that appeared consonant with his temperament and point of view; as is illustrated by Chillingworth's aphorism that "the Bible and the Bible only is the religion of Protestants". We have already discussed this question at length, showing how in the various schools of thought in the Church of England, it was gradually re-perceived that this Rule of Faith is insufficient, unless, that is to say, it is viewed through this or that medium—the Fathers, or the Prayer Book, or the consent of Rome, Moscow and Canterbury, or the "Westminster Confession"—or, finally, through the exceedingly narrow and transient medium of "modern thought" and criticism. But it must be remembered that this need has scarcely even now been perceived by the Nonconformist sects, who still, it would appear,

[1] Articles VI, XX, etc.

seem to think that the Scriptures can be approached by the uninstructed individual without prejudice or even predisposition; and even less, of course, by the Individualist who is apt to think that he and he alone is of all men utterly detached and even-minded. Yet it is necessary to remember that such is the Separatist idea. He still claims, though lately with a more faltering voice,[1] that his own creed is the one certain and luminous and straightforward statement of the principles laid down by God in His written Word. An explanation of the position may perhaps be found in the fact that the Nonconformist denominations have, up to the present, found their supporters chiefly among the half-educated—among men, that is to say, who know enough to recognize their knowledge, but not enough to recognize their ignorance. They have produced, indeed, men of great personal holiness, as well as vivid, poetical and spiritual writers; but they have produced very few real thinkers—very few men, that is, who can stand in imagination outside their system and criticise it from an impersonal point of view.

3. Again: Though Individualism was ultimately produced by the first impetus of the Reformation, yet Individualists themselves have social instincts that cannot altogether be suppressed. Men may fancy that they can stand utterly alone with God's Revela-

[1] It was recently said by a prominent Nonconformist minister that competition between the sects and the representation of many points of view actually served the cause of truth better than could complete unanimity of doctrine.

tion—and their individualism may assert itself constantly in moments of emotion or reflection—yet, as a matter of fact, they cannot long continue to do so. Sooner or later they will begin to re-form themselves into groups, between whom and themselves there will be the constant action and reaction of mutual influence. They will begin, that is to say, to re-climb again that descent down which they have come, at the top of which stands Catholicism whole and entire. It was in this manner that the various Nonconformist sects came into existence. England, in its deepest religious consciousness, had crumbled into Individualism, with solidified groups here and there, in the form of the older Dissenting congregations: in our own day, we see, in the constant formation of new sects, the ineradicable social instincts reasserting themselves once more.

The most startling example of this kind is, however, to be found in the recent movement in the direction of "Free Church Federation". It is remarkable, first, that the word "Church" is used at all in this connexion, since the old idea was that of congregations who, all joined together, went to compose the one Invisible Church of Christ. It is secondly remarkable that the movement should be in the nature of federation, since this implies a recognition that what unites professing Christians is more considerable than that which separates them. It was precisely the opposite principle to this that originally brought the Independents into an organized existence.

Three or four elements have tended to bring this movement about—some worthy and some unworthy.

(1) The growing infidelity of modern times—an infidelity, of course, absolutely inevitable on the heels of Individualism—made necessary some kind of united action on the part of those who still retained portions of the Catholic Creed.

(2) The very social principle already referred to, drove men to ask whether the principles on which they had separated from their brethren were sufficiently vital to justify the continuance of separation.

(3) Owing to the class from which Nonconformists are chiefly drawn—viz., the middle, and half-educated class—a certain social jealousy was bound sooner or later to make its appearance—chiefly directed against the Establishment—so soon as the comparatively transient spiritual impetus faded, with which each Separatist movement had begun.

(4) The extraordinary development of political activity—so great at the present day as almost to have ousted from the more fashionable chapels anything resembling that spiritual religion so characteristic of the origins of Separatism—naturally fostered and sustains at present a movement towards an unity that carries with it undoubted political weight. But that there was a real spiritual intention, at least at first, in the organizers of this Federation, is evident from the Catechism of "Free Church" doctrine, published during the first years of the movement. (This Catechism will be discussed presently.)

The Federation then is a very interesting and significant phenomenon for two or three reasons. First, it is an illustration of a movement towards some sort of

idea of an ultimate reunion of Christians, which may have results even in the direction of Catholicism in the future; secondly, because its very name—as well as the character common to all the denominations that have joined in it—witnesses to a real spiritual principle—viz., the intolerability of a claim on the part of the secular State to define any doctrinal matter. This principle of freedom from the State in doctrinal matters is, indeed, one of the very few principles in which the Catholic and the Nonconformist find themselves at one. It was in defence of this principle that the English martyrs suffered at Tyburn, and John Bunyan in the prison at Bedford. It is for the lack of this principle that the Church of England has lost to such a large extent the influence she once enjoyed. It cannot, however, but be noted by the Catholic how extraordinary is the lack of imaginative vision in the pride taken by Nonconformists in their recent developments. The growing desire for reunion and the considerable organization that has taken place, after all is limited by the Anglo-Saxon races and only to certain temperaments within those limits, and takes no account at all either of the East or of the Latin countries of Europe. It is true that there are such things as Protestant missions to the heathen, but the feebleness and narrowness of them, as a whole, are simply indescribable.[1] Practically it may be said that there is scarcely present to the average Nonconformist mind even the ideal of one Church and one Faith throughout the entire world; the nearest approach to such an ideal can

[1] Cf. Marshall on Foreign Missions.

be found only in the "Bible Society" whose ambition it is to present the Scriptures, without commentary or interpreter, in all the known languages of the world, and to assist in their distribution—an ambition that, however well intentioned, is little better than sheer superstition and bibliolatry. The Church of England certainly has larger ideas than these; her missions, especially in Africa, India and the East, are quite considerable and are organized with at least an Imperial if not a "Catholic" motive. She, however, too, is enfeebled by the virus of Nationalism, and has even gone so far as to contemplate the imposition of the Thirty-nine Articles upon her Japanese converts. . . . But the Nonconformists, by their very pride in their missionary efforts and their home-organizations show more eloquently than any coloured "missionary map" how wholly lacking they are in the Catholic idea. In time, as well as in space, they are handicapped; for bodies that do not even profess a continuity of life for more than three or four hundred years, can scarcely be expected even to see as a realizable though far-off vision all the kingdoms and peoples of the world forming one fold under one Shepherd. They have produced individual missionaries of entire self-devotion and zeal, but no more.

4. The movement towards the Federation of the Nonconformist sects began to take shape in the last decade of the last century, and culminated in a "National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches," held at Nottingham in 1896 under the presidency of Mr. Price Hughes, of the Wesleyan Methodists; and a yearly Congress has been held ever since. Briefly, its

avowed objects are to bring about "fraternal intercourse" between the denominations, to increase and foster spirituality, to develop organization, to help on the application of religion to daily life, and "to advocate the New Testament doctrine of the Church and to defend the rights of the associated Churches". It is unnecessary to enumerate the various bodies represented in this movement; the principal among them will be discussed severally later on; but it may be said that their adherents represent about half of the professing Christians of this country. There is no doubt whatever that the enormously increased weight of political influence enjoyed by Nonconformists at the present time is owing largely to the efforts made by the promoters of this movement, and to the immense force that has been organized and directed through its means. It would seem likely that the power thus generated will win greater effects in the future, and that Puritanism, more or less Christian, allied with Liberalism as its political expression, will take a very considerable part in moulding the immediate destinies of the country. The fact is one more example of the strange swinging of the Protestant pendulum. Those bodies who once withdrew from the shadow of the State in order that spirituality and unworldliness might develop in peace, once more are returning to political life with far more power (but probably less and less spirituality) than is wielded by that body which has enjoyed Establishment and the protection of the State for so long.

It is pleasant, however, to observe that almost the

first important work of the Federation was the drawing up of a Catechism which, it was claimed, represented the least common multiple of the doctrinal tenets held by the bodies which took part in the movement; and this fact remains, although, as was said at the time of its promulgation, and has been emphasized more strongly since, the divines who drew it up, exceeded their powers, and did not really represent the views of those for whom they spoke. For it is astonishing, at first sight, that so much orthodox doctrine—and even sacramentalism—should have survived the multiplication of the sects, and should still be held in common, even theoretically, by those who once thought it necessary, for principle's sake, to be out of communion one from another. It is only on analysis that it is perceived how vague and elusive are the formularies dealing with doctrine.[1] The intention of the Catechism is indeed admirable enough—namely, to present in as orthodox a manner as possible as many orthodox doctrines as possible; yet analysis reveals how general must be the terms in which such an intention is embodied. The Catechism illustrates, in even greater degree than does that of the Church of England, the essential difference between Catholic and Non-Catholic formularies. Roughly speaking, the Catholic formulary has as its object the definition of exact truth in as detailed a

[1] In fact it may be said generally that theology—in the Catholic sense of it as being an actual science—is practically unknown amongst Nonconformists. Certain eminent Dissenting writers have written suggestive and thoughtful books—Dr. Dale's book on the Atonement is a fine example of this class—yet of "theologians" in the strict sense there are none.

manner as possible, in order, among other things, to distinguish the faithful from the heterodox; the Non-Catholic formulary aims so to define what is held as truth as to include and embrace as many minds and points of view as possible. Catholicism seeks to bring the individualities of men under the power of Revelation; Separatism, by a strange irony, to stretch Revelation to the individualities of men.

Particular points in the Catechism that are worth observation, are as follows:—[1]

(*a*) The doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ is taught implicitly rather than explicitly. Christ is referred to as "God," as the "Mediator," the "Advocate," "our Head and King," "our Teacher, Saviour and Lord"; but Arianism is perfectly compatible with all that is actually defined in this Catechism with regard to His Person. All that is directly stated on the point is as follows:—

4. *What does Jesus say about Himself?*

That He is the Son of God, Whom the Father in His great love sent into the world to be our Saviour from sin. . . .

19. *What is the mystery of the Blessed Trinity?*

That the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, into Whose Name we are baptized, are one God. . . .

22. *What is it to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?*

It means that we rely on him [sic] *as our Teacher, Saviour and Lord, putting our whole trust in the grace of God through Him.*

[1] The version of the Catechism here quoted is entitled "An Evangelical Free Church Catechism," published at the Thomas Law Memorial Hall, and is the 29th edition.

There is, in fact, in this Catechism, no statement equivalent to the doctrine that Jesus Christ is "of one Substance with the Father . . . equal to the Father as touching His Godhead"; and the omission is probably intentional, or at least significant.

(*b*) The definition of "the Holy Catholic Church" is as follows:—

33. *It is that Holy Society of believers in Christ Jesus which He founded, of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit: so that, though made up of many Communions, organized in various modes, and scattered throughout the world, it is yet One in Him.*

And:—

34. *For what ends did our Lord found His Church?*

He united His people into this visible brotherhood for the worship of God and the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments; for mutual edification, the administration of discipline, and the advancement of His Kingdom.

And:—

35. *What is the essential mark of a true branch of the Catholic Church?*

The essential mark of a true branch of the Catholic Church is the presence of Christ, through His indwelling Spirit, manifested in holy life and fellowship.

Now at first sight this language is comparatively orthodox; the administration of the Sacraments is declared to be necessary to true Christianity; the Church is described as "visible," and as founded by Jesus Christ. Yet, on examination, the definition is seen to be almost useless for the purpose of discrimination,

since there is no mention of any creed or "symbol" to preserve unity of doctrine, and no "mark" beyond that which could be equally well claimed by any sect however unorthodox, or even degraded, which chose to claim the name of Christian. The answer to the further question, *What is a Free Church?* seems equally disingenuous or ingenuous.

A Church which acknowledges none but Jesus Christ as Head, and therefore exercises its right to interpret and administer His laws without restraint or control by the State.

For there is, simply, not one sect or denomination of any kind whatever which does not claim that Jesus Christ alone is its Head—the most Erastian of Establishments as much as any other; neither is there one sect or denomination which has not either a person or a council as Christ's earthly representative and interpreter. It is impossible to think that the framers of this Catechism deliberately wished to confuse the issues; it is only possible therefore to believe that they had not sufficiently thought out their premises, or distinguished between the senses in which Jesus Christ, and the Pope (or the King, or the President of a Nonconformist Council) may all legitimately be described as "heads" of a Church on earth. Their intention, of course, is both evident and praiseworthy; it is to vindicate the "Church" as a spiritual and supernatural body; but the confusion of their language or thought is very characteristic of their work as a whole.

It must be remarked, however, as a great gain that

at any rate there is before their eyes an ideal or a vision of one Church throughout the world, even though that Church is "made up of many communions"; and that that Church is so defined that even Catholics are not thought to be necessarily excluded. The theory is in fact, in substance, the old "branch-theory" of the Tractarians, under slightly more vague conditions.

(*c*) The definitions concerning the ministry are as follows:—

39. *What is a Christian minister?*

A Christian minister is one who is called of God and the Church to be a teacher of the Word, and a pastor of the flock of Christ.

40. *How may the validity of such a Ministry be proved?*

The decisive proof of a valid Ministry is the sanction of the Divine Head of the Church, manifested in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the Body of Christ.

Here once more is this same confused vagueness, relieved only by the words regarding the call of the minister by "the Church". A valid ministry, then, is not merely a self-constituted one; there must be some sort of commission externally delivered to the aspirant by some representative of that body also vaguely defined as the "Catholic Church," or of one of its "branches". But, for the rest, the definition is useless. For who is to decide as to what degree or nature of "the conversion of sinners or the edification of the Body of Christ" is a sufficient guarantee? The "decisive proof" is completely indecisive. Neither, it will

be observed, is there any hint given that the administration of sacraments is any direct function of the minister, as such.

(*d*) The sacramental teaching is as vague, yet as indicative of a confusedly Catholic ideal, as the rest. There are declared to be two sacraments only—Baptism and the Lord's Supper (without even the slightly saving clause of the Anglican Catechism to the effect that there are "two only, as generally necessary to salvation")—and the sacraments are described as "Sacred rites instituted by our Lord Jesus to make more plain by visible signs the inward benefits of the Gospel, to assure us of His promised grace, and, when rightly used, to become a means to convey it to our hearts". Further the "inward benefits signified" by Baptism are "the washing away of sin and the new birth wrought by the Holy Spirit in all who repent and believe"; and, in the Lord's Supper, "By the Bread is signified the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in which He lived and died; by the wine is signified His Blood shed once for all upon the Cross for the remission of sins". And, again:—

47. *What do they receive who in penitence and faith partake of this sacrament?*

They feed spiritually upon Christ as the nourishment of the soul, by which they are strengthened and refreshed.

There are several observations to be made upon these points.

(1) It is deliberately left an open question as to whether in baptism the "washing away of sin and the

new birth" are actually conveyed by the rite, or merely symbolized as being among the "inward benefits of the Gospel". Certainly grace in general is said to be conveyed if the sacrament is "rightly used"; but not necessarily these graces. It is possible then for both the believer and the disbeliever in Baptismal Regeneration to use this definition, according as each interprets the word "signify".

(2) So, too, with regard to the Body and Blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, it is possible to take the definition in either sense. His Body and Blood are "signified" by the "Bread and wine,"[1] and the soul "feeds spiritually" upon Christ in general. The Zwinglian and the Lutheran, or even the High Anglican, could alike accept this definition as tolerable, or, at least, as not actually "heretical". At the same time—as will be shown later—the absence of ceremonial dignity, in the administration of the sacrament, indicates plainly in which direction lies the ordinary accepted interpretation of these definitions.

(3) That this vagueness is deliberate is implied in a sentence to the preface to this Catechism, contributed by Mr. Price Hughes, in which he deplores the "lamentable day when Martin Luther contended with Huldreich Zwingli".

(4) It should be noted that nothing is said as to Infant Baptism, as indeed it hardly could be in a Catechism intended as an eirenicon between those who practise it and those who do not. The phrase "rightly

[1] I cannot help thinking that the alternate use and disuse of the capital letter are deliberate.

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used" applied to the sacraments in general, is particularly appropriate here, since it is patient of practically any interpretation.

(*e*) On other points of doctrine the Catechism is sufficiently orthodox, though far from explicit. On the Being and Nature of God, on Sin, and its consequences, including even "death eternal," the Incarnation, the Mediation of Christ and the Atonement. His Resurrection, Ascension and Session, all is, within limits, satisfactory; and this, in the days of "modern thought" and "new theology," is a considerable relief. There is very little trace of any "justification by faith only"; at any rate the doctrine is not at all emphasized. There is a fair summary of the Ten Commandments; with only one dispassionate warning against "the use of images or other devices of men"; a definition of prayer; a description of "the Holy Bible" as "the inspired record of God's Revelation"; and "the Sacraments" are mentioned as among the "special means" provided by God to "assist us in leading a life of obedience". There is an analysis of the *Our Father*, and definitions of the respective and mutual duties of Church and State: in this latter point it is declared to be the duty of the State to extend toleration to all "efforts to promote the religion of Christ, which do not interfere with the civil rights of others". Finally there are a few sentences on eschatology.

To sum up, then:—

(1) Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the charitable and tolerant spirit of the Catechism from beginning to end. "Evangelical Christianity" used to

be distinguished at least as much by its virulent condemnations of Popery and Prelacy as by its positive principles. It is distinguished now, so far as it is represented by this Catechism, by its efforts to heal breaches and refrain from strife. But its efforts after tolerance can only be sustained by the sacrifice of any attempt to define exact truth. Underneath all the bitterness of past years, there was at any rate a zeal for exact truth so far as it could be ascertained; at present it seems to be the desire of the professors to unite as many Christians as possible under cover of phrases whose signification is not agreed upon. A unity of this nature is not worth much; it is verbal and superficial, rather than real and profound. The committee responsible for this Catechism consists of five Congregationalists, three Baptists, two English Presbyterians, and ten Methodists of various kinds; and these divines, it seems, have been actuated by a desire to agree upon a common formulary rather than upon a common body of belief. They have not relinquished —they have only suppressed—the doctrines that divide them; and although their attempt undoubtedly makes for religious peace, it cannot be said to make for the elucidation of truth. It settles no controversies; it decides no disputed points: it evades them, or covers them with a phrase.

(2) It is remarkable, however, to notice how far Catholic ideals are once more beginning to loom through the mists of Protestantism. It is true that on the great points round which, historically, the conflict once turned—the Sacraments, the Church, the

Real Presence, Justification, and the like—nothing Catholic is explicitly taught; yet it is much to be thankful for that very little Catholic teaching is explicitly repudiated. And, further, phrases and sentences are used, certainly primarily bearing a Protestant meaning, yet almost Catholic in their sound, and, in some cases, actually patient of a Catholic interpretation.

Once more the idea of a world-wide Church—an external visible body—is beginning to take the place of a purely invisible Church, and of a series of completely independent congregations. A ministry is recognized which depends for its validity upon some kind of exterior mission; and positive teaching upon sacraments occupies a much larger proportion of space than could have been the case half a century ago. It would seem—so far as this Catechism really represents the official mind of Nonconformity[1]—as if something of a reaction were in process; and as if the great outlines of Catholic Christianity, so long obscured by the dust of Protestant controversy upon comparatively small points, were beginning to reassert themselves. Probably this reaction will not go very far; for there is a solvent at work—as will be observed presently—upon the very foundations of historical Christianity among the Nonconformist bodies; but it is at least something to be thankful for, that a larger view of religion has become possible at all.

The compilers of this Catechism are not trained theologians in the Catholic sense; and it is of no use

[1] It is claimed by the compilers of this Catechism that they represent the views of a laity numbering about sixty millions.

to examine their statements too minutely, or, indeed, to regard their opinions as in the least final, or binding upon their respective flocks. All that can be said, in general, of their work, is that it shows the virtues of tolerance and charity, and is, on the whole, favourable in the direction of a more or less orthodox revival.

CHAPTER III.

VARIOUS NONCONFORMIST BODIES (GENERAL).

It has been seen, in the discussion of the Free Church Catechism, what is, in broad outlines, the general body of doctrine to which the principal Nonconformist sects more or less approximate. All those, that is to say, whose names are subscribed to that formulary are at least content to accept it as a tolerable exposition of their views. Since there are, however, certain points on which each lays stress as characteristic of itself, it will be necessary to discuss these briefly one by one. First, however, a few further remarks on Nonconformity in general are necessary.

(i.) (1) It is an element common to all these sects, in greater or less degree, to repudiate ceremonialism. Since Nonconformity is an attempt to "spiritualize" religion, it is, of course, perfectly natural, since human nature is what it is, that the external should be thought to be the adversary, or, at the best, but a very doubtful friend, of the internal. Not only has sacramental doctrine in the Catholic sense ceased to be held by these sects, but ceremonial in the ordinary understood sense has disappeared with it; that is to say, at least nearly all such ceremonial as is significant of the action of God

towards men. There has survived, from the necessities of the case, a certain amount of such ceremonial as is significant of man's action towards God. And the ceremonial used or omitted must be taken into account in the interpretation of such formularies as the Catechism just discussed.

A few concrete examples may illustrate this :—

(*a*) First, all ceremonial connected with doctrines explicitly repudiated by Nonconformists has of course entirely vanished. The splendour of the altar, and, practically, the dignity of the Communion Table, has gone with all its belongings—sacrificial vestments, altar lights and the rest. But since the essence of Nonconformist Christianity lies in the "preaching of the Gospel," a corresponding exaltation has taken place with regard to the pulpit, placed as it is in the position of supreme dignity corresponding to that occupied by the altar in Catholic churches. It is curiously ironical that a movement which has as its professed object the removal of any human intermediary between God and the soul, should have as its result the substitution of the pulpit for the Tabernacle, and a preacher for a priest.

(*b*) Next, since all outward signs symbolical of God's Majesty have disappeared, it is natural that the corresponding outward signs of man's reverence towards God should also have nearly vanished. For example, in the vast majority of Nonconformist chapels there is no provision made for the kneeling attitude : the utmost that is practised in such chapels during prayer is a kind of crouching posture.

(*c*) Since the preacher has taken the place of the priest, a certain unprescribed code of ritual has, from the necessities of the case, grown up around him, at least in the more wealthy chapels. The surplice has disappeared, since it is faintly suggestive of a spiritual meaning, and therefore is thought to be slightly superstitious and unspiritual; but the preaching gown, often of great splendour in its material, has taken its place, since this, together with the University hood, is significant of nothing directly spiritual. The minister's attitudes, too, in prayer, preaching and exposition, are practically prescribed for him by universal custom. So far has the exaltation of the minister advanced in recent years, that it has become the usual practice for him to wear the Roman collar in public, and to be addressed as "Reverend".

(*d*) With the loss of any belief in the value of externals, there has disappeared also any idea of even relative sanctity in places and days—always with the exception of Sunday, called officially "The Lord's Day". The chapel, though in many instances at the present day built to resemble a Catholic church, and adorned with stained windows and organ, and even with the cross externally, is not thought to possess any character incompatible with its being used as a place of mildly secular entertainment or good fellowship. Political lectures are freely delivered in these chapels, and more or less festive teas held there on such days as Good Friday. It is with no thought or intention of irreverence that such things are done; rather they are the result of a definite attempt to "spiritualize"

life, and to free the soul's access to God from such use of material things as was thought to hinder it.

(2) Similar modifications have taken place with regard to all forms of liturgy. In the beginnings of Puritanism it was thought that set forms of worship were unspiritual and fettering to the free movement of the soul, and the Anglican Book of Common Prayer was held in almost as great a detestation as the missal or breviary itself. Extempore prayer, therefore, took its place.

Once more, however, human nature has taken its revenge, and those who once resented an impersonal and printed book as savouring too much of man, are now at the mercy of the personal and transient moods of one man, who prays aloud on their behalf. The inevitable result of this, too, has, however, taken place; and while in most instances the prayer is composed beforehand by the minister with as much deliberation as the sermon (and, indeed, sometimes printed and published for family use), in others a frequent return is made to the Anglican Prayer Book, from which selected portions are taken in an almost liturgical order.

With regard to the celebration of sacraments a diverse use obtains; but it may be said that all Nonconformist sacramental services approximate more or less to the Presbyterian model already described. In an increasing number of chapels, however, some temperance beverage, or even water itself, is being substituted for wine in the communion, and the service practically always takes place in the evening on the comparatively few occasions in the year on which it is cele-

brated. Little separate glasses, too, are, in the interests of health, not infrequently substituted for the communion-cup.

(ii.) A great feature of Nonconformist religion is found in what are known as "Revival Services," which resemble to some extent missions preached by Catholic priests. It will be remembered that in Wales not long ago there was a great outburst of fervour roused by this means.

The object of these Revival Services is primarily to awaken first a sense of sin in the hearers, and next, by eliciting in the penitent an act of faith in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of the world and the one sacrifice for sin, to effect his conversion and salvation.

The method used in these Revivals almost entirely consists of fervent and passionate preaching and prayer, and in the raising of the emotions of those who are present; but it is almost impossible to describe to those who have not witnessed it, especially in the Celtic districts of Wales and Cornwall, the pitch of excitement that is often reached. Men and women will openly confess their sins before the congregation or relate their most intimate spiritual experiences; hysteria often makes its appearance in unmistakable forms; and there are far greater evils than all these, arising straight from the uncontrolled uprush of the passions under this violent stimulus. Further, there is the inevitable and deplorable result, that many of the "converted," experiencing later the certain reaction from such an emotional crisis, and possessing no system of

direction, penance, worship and communion by which fervour might be sustained and guided, fall back again into an apathy and indifference to all religious appeal, for which there seems no remedy. This state of things is further aggravated by a certain popular doctrine that for a backslider after such a conversion as this, there remains little or no hope in God's mercy.

It must not, however, be thought that no good results follow from these Revival Services. On the contrary, it is quite certain that in some instances true acts of contrition are elicited from the penitents, souls are brought into real interior contact with God, and the foundations are laid for lives of real goodness and endeavour. It may very well be that, under the circumstances, the bad results predominate over the good, and the ultimate losses over the gains; yet it is necessary to remember that the good still remains. It would be extremely unwise, for example, for a priest dealing with an inquirer who has experienced such a "conversion," to treat it as a merely emotional crisis: it may, on the contrary, very well have been a real spiritual movement accompanied by the action of grace.

(iii.) 1. A recent movement in Nonconformist religion, affecting not Nonconformists only, but indeed a certain class of Anglicans as well, must not be omitted here. It is the movement known as that of the "New Theology".

It would be impossible here to give an adequate account of the contents of this new tendency—so far as it is new. The Rev. R. J. Campbell, pastor of the

"City Temple," usually considered the leader of the movement, has written a volume upon the subject which must be consulted by any who would really acquaint themselves with it; but a few remarks may be made here upon its leading characteristics.

Mr. Campbell is a Congregationalist minister, and, therefore, as will be seen later, in that position enjoys a freedom not open to the ministers of those bodies under a strong central control. Yet it is remarkable that his congregation, professedly Christian, has taken so quietly, on the whole, teaching which is in its essence completely subversive of historical Christianity as commonly understood. Teachers of the "New Theology," however, entirely repudiate this interpretation of their system, and inform their followers that the real essence of Christianity is still retained, and in the only form in which, in the future, educated persons will be able to conceive of the contents of the ancient creeds. The old dogmas, we are told, contained a substratum of truth beneath a quantity of falsehood; and it is for the re-statement of this truth, suitable for modern times, and tenable in the light of modern knowledge, rather than for the establishment of a different religion, that the "New Theology" is designed. It is necessary to add, however, that amongst many sections of the Nonconformist public, the "New Theology" is repudiated and condemned, and its adherents denounced as no less than apostate from Christianity. The "new theologians," too, as a class, are not considered by their brethren as very sound or erudite scholars. Yet, since the movement has won a

place for itself in modern Non-Catholic thought, and is plainly only a formulation of conclusions to which many Protestant minds have been for long, and inevitably, approaching, it is necessary to give a brief account of its main characteristics.

(1) The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, in the old sense, is explicitly repudiated. All men, we are told, are capable of "becoming Christs". All that Christ did and was, it is within the power of other men to do and be. All are potential Christs and Sons of God: all are capable of attaining to His sinlessness and knowledge (such as they were); all can "atone" for the sins of the world by the defence of the right, by witnessing to truth, and by suffering for it, in the same kind as that in which Christ suffered on Calvary. He is the most perfect of men, supremely *the* Son of Man, and, in exactly that degree therefore, *the* Son of God, since God is in man. There is no difference in kind between Him and His human brothers.

(2) The teaching of this school concerning God is indistinguishable from Pantheism. Human consciousness stands in the same kind of relation to Divine consciousness, as that in which a bay or harbour stands to the open sea. There is one vast Spirit permeating all, transcendent only of creation in so far as it is in itself unlimited and creation is limited. All energy and activity is Divine in its very essence; even the most "sinful" and uncontrolled energies rise from the action of "God"; such passions as those of lust or greed are, though deplorable, manifestations of a Divine power, and embody real, though mistaken and

reprehensible attempts, to realize good. There is no sin, in the strict sense, there is only ignorance and selfishness and limitation. There is, therefore, in reality nothing corresponding to the idea of Atonement, or of the offering of an innocent and willing victim to God, by which offering sin might be remitted.

(3) The "supernatural," too, in the understood sense, has no existence. There are not two worlds, of nature and grace, but one only, with one set of laws permeating the whole. "Miracles" are impossible; events apparently miraculous are but unusual manifestations of some natural law not yet understood. The Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of Christ are not facts; their definition was only a crude and mistaken manner of embodying spiritual facts that underlay belief in them. The essence of the Resurrection-dogma, for example, lies in the survival and the living power of Jesus Christ in the world to-day.

On principles such as these it is easy to see what the "New Theology" makes of the doctrines of the sacraments and of grace. Grace is merely the Divine energy working in the soul almost blindly; the sacraments are but occasions of, and picturesque incentives towards, virtuous effort. The utmost that they can effect is, like the effect of the Cross itself, merely a dramatic appeal to the finer and nobler emotions of men.

(4) The doctrine of Hell is of course entirely repudiated, and Universalism has taken its place.

Such are, more or less, the principal theological conclusions formulated by the new movement; and

they are accompanied, in the realm of exegesis, by a very radical form of "Higher Criticism," by which the utterances of the Apostles and of Christ Himself are criticized with entire freedom; and, in the realm of politics, by advanced Socialism. The movement is, in all its branches, perhaps the most characteristically "modern" of all modernities, and embodies the very latest and most transient conclusions of the most recent and popular tendencies. Antiquity and tradition are reckoned as of no importance at all; and, while experience is considered as the sole foundation of religious truth, the "experience" of the past is dismissed as childish and immature: the present only is held to be of any considerable value. In this respect, as well as in some of its theological conclusions, the movement shows an affinity with the extreme forms of continental "modernism".[1]

It is this movement that is beginning to affect—or, perhaps, even more, to express—the tendencies of all modern religious thought that is unconfined by authoritative formularies. While most Nonconformist bodies have indeed certain trust-deeds by which a continuity of teaching is supposed to be secured, and by their faithfulness to which their right to hold endowments, devoted to those respective codes of belief, is intended to be tested; yet the terms in which these deeds are drawn up are often so vague and indefinite

[1] It is interesting to note that at a recent meeting of the "Congregational Union," the authorities, while showing a certain disapproval of the "new-theology" tenets, refused, as a matter of fact, explicitly to condemn them—no doubt in the interests of "liberty".

as to permit of enormous divergencies from the substance which they were intended to embody. So long as the old phrases are employed and certain terms of communion and discipline observed, new interpretations may be developed to an astonishing extent, without the letter of the law being infringed, or the endowments forfeited.[1] Anglicanism, too, in a lesser degree, is capable of these adaptations (and has therefore to some extent been affected by the "New Theology"); but the Thirty-nine Articles and the Prayer Book as well as the retention of the Three Creeds, at any rate up to the present, make impossible such a complete evacuation of the Christian position as has been accomplished in certain of the Nonconformist congregations. The Broad Church School, however, as has already been remarked, exhibits some characteristics of this recent movement; and the temper of mind in which such a theological point of view takes its rise and flourishes, if not the theological standpoint itself, is of very wide prevalence at the present day in Non-Catholic circles. The movement for the abolition of the Athanasian Creed is a recurrent symptom of this tendency.

2. The difficulties in meeting satisfactorily such "theologians" as these are, of course, innumerable and disheartening. For, first, there is practically no platform at all on which the controversy can be conducted. Not only is all present-day external authority in

[1] A recent case, still *sub judice*, shows the possibility of the expulsion of a minister from a chapel for refusing to preach the Calvinistic creed laid down by the trust-deeds of the chapel.

matters of faith repudiated by them, but the very appeal first made by their Puritan predecessors to the Bible as the written Word of God, is also set aside. According to their system there is no infallible authority anywhere, since all men are equally liable to error, and the human authors of the Scriptures no less than the rest. The one court that must be obeyed—and that a fallible one like all others—is the interior consciousness and "experience" of each individual. There is no final revelation anywhere: "Revelation" at the best is a gradual and continuous process, carried on by the Divine action in the best consciousness of the best men, slowly, with many mistakes and much retracing of steps, emerging, not into absolute truth, but into the nearest to it that can be attained. Obviously, then, if there is no final court of appeal anywhere—not even in a written book, I have no more right to object to another man's "experience" than he has to object to mine. Argument becomes very nearly impossible.

The argument with them then—such as it is—must begin at the very beginning; and yet even so it is an argument that is, humanly speaking, almost bound to fail of its effect, since, as will have been seen, the new theologian, however profound his spiritual humility may be, is practically, from his very premises, bound to take his stand upon the most intense form conceivable of intellectual pride. Certainly this pride takes most seductive and appealing appearances; it shapes itself into a confession of entire ignorance, but its humility is tempered by an insistence upon the ignorance of all other men as well. That no formulated

dogma can be possibly true, at least in the sense in which it was drawn up, is an inevitable corollary from the statement that "Revelation" must always be continuous; that a twentieth-century divine is in certain matters qualified to judge and to condemn the fallible and immature teaching of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, is a further corollary of the same statement. And yet one further corollary follows from the premises of the "new theologians," to the effect that the most recent opinion of modern days is more trustworthy than any conclusions of departed saints and doctors.

The argument, then, if it can be conducted at all under these conditions, must begin, as has been remarked from the very beginning, and deal with such subjects as the existence of a Personal God, evidences of the Divinity of Christ, and the proofs of His Divine Mission. It is, of course, extraordinarily easy destructively to criticize the philosophical and exegetical positions of the "new theologian," yet not much purpose would be served by this method, since he is, on his premises, as ready to declare himself as wrong as his adversary. It is not demolition that he needs—his misfortune is that he has already demolished too much—it is rather a patient and painstaking building-up before his eyes of the solid bases of the Christian religion in its more elementary and fundamental aspects.

Yet with all this should go a cordial recognition of his good intentions, his intellectual energy, and his fearless, if rash, proclamation of his opinions even to his own personal detriment, as well as of certain

true principles which he has rescued from the crumbling ethics of many of his Protestant brethren.

(*a*) It is something gained that he is not a formalist of the Pharisaic type. The movement, in fact, is very largely energized by a healthy reaction against a mere repetition of formularies not assimilated, and a mere slothful reliance upon the Cross of Christ without any effort to correspond with its teaching. There is no more bitter fruit anywhere of the discredited doctrine of Justification by Faith only than the life of spiritual lethargy and worldliness which its professors are enabled by it, almost conscientiously, to lead. The "new theologian" at least has done this: he has faced facts and attempted to think about them; he has refused any longer to acquiesce in a system of mere unintelligent emotionalism; he has determined to repeat no longer phrases which have become to him meaningless fetishes.

(*b*) It is true that his system is a caricature of thought, but it is thought that he has caricatured. He has realized, for example, something of the doctrine of Divine Immanence, and if he has forgotten its correlative of Divine Transcendence, it is something that he has not forgotten them both. "Immanence" has become for him such an amazing reality that he may be pardoned if, for a while he conceives of it as the only reality. This sympathy with the creature is so intense that he has, temporarily, confused it with the Creator.

(*c*) It must be remembered that even his Socialism itself is an honest attempt to embody his new perception of the brotherhood of men. He is so filled with

a realization of human rights that once more he has forgotten Divine rights; and his heresy, as a whole, startling and blasphemous though it is to Catholic ears, takes, like all other heresies, what strength it has from true principles rather than from false. His logic is pitilessly correct; all that is wrong with it is that it begins with wholly inadequate and faulty premises. Even his very intellectual pride itself is largely due to the same considerations; if man were, in reality, the highest manifestation of the Divine Life, and the process of time an inevitably widening Revelation, the most recent religious thinker would be perfectly right in considering himself not only the heir of all the ages, but the Lord and Master of the whole world at that stage of it in which he lives.

(iv.) A further characteristic of Nonconformity should be mentioned here, which, though not in itself connected with any dogmatic position, is yet so intimately bound up with the system as to be responsible to a large extent for that system's success among the middle-classes of England. This is the social life fostered and encouraged by the chapels.

Mr. Charles Booth's studies of the religious influences of London show plainly enough that Nonconformity, with one or two exceptions, has practically no effect at all upon the lowest class of the population; and what is true of London is true elsewhere. Chapels simply do not flourish among the very poor. Neither has Nonconformity any power at all among the Upper Ten. It is the widespread strength enjoyed by this system of

belief among the comfortable and tolerably well-to-do, that gives it its power to-day. And that power is sustained to a very large degree by the admirable manner in which the life of the chapel is extended and organized in such departments as those of recreation, study and social meetings, amongst those classes who can enjoy these things in common.

For example, a great feature of Nonconformist activity lies in its Men's Meetings or "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons". That this kind of semi-religious entertainment[1] has a deplorable result upon real religion (for, quite naturally, attendance at this half-concert, half-lecture affair is soon thought to fulfil all the duties of worship) cannot be denied. Yet, on the other hand, its success in attaching men to the chapel system is equally undeniable. They find there that religion is presented to them in a form that makes practically no demands at all upon self-denial, and is made further palatable by excellent music, easy companionship, and interesting short ethical lectures. Their conscience is soon satisfied that they are not neglecting religion altogether, and they are entertained by the very process itself. Nor are they usually troubled much at these services by the preaching of any dogmas except the most reassuring and comfortable. Further, in connexion with the Men's Meetings, there are organized even more social entertainments, outings, excursions and popular lectures; and at almost every point in

[1] The author noticed recently in Boston, U.S.A., the title of "The Under-dog" announced as the subject of the sermon in a Baptist Chapel.

the members' lives it is to the chapel that they look for encouragement and recreation.

No doubt in their origins these semi-religious meetings were aimed at the drawing under the influence of religion men who were altogether alienated from it, in the same kind of manner as were the "Oratorios" of St. Philip; yet the lack of any coherent system of worship or of any definite code of religious observances in the Nonconformist bodies, has resulted in the weakening rather than in the strengthening of real spiritual life by these means.[1]

Other extensions of the same system are to be found in the "Mothers' Meetings," the Bible Classes, and above all, in the Sunday Schools. In all, the religious intention is evident, and the religious element always present; yet the inevitable result of a lack of definite dogma and practice has come about, and it is probably in the "teas" and the excursions and the entertainments, and the "prize-givings" rather than in any explicit Christianity, that their strength lies.

Lastly, the unsacerdotal form of belief has made possible yet one more enticement to certain kinds of minds to adhere to the chapel—and that, the opportunities offered to the talkative and complacent to engage in more or less ministerial work. Any man with a gift of speech can easily find opportunities of exercising it; he can conduct Bible Classes or give addresses with considerable freedom; and if he has

[1] At a recent Nonconformist gathering in Hull, one of the speakers earned a considerable degree of unpopularity by his very outspoken criticisms of the P.S.A. system of religion.

true zeal and devotion he can honestly feel that he can use these gifts to real advantage. It is a common complaint amongst converts to Catholicism, drawn from those circles, that their personal service is no longer required; and it would be as well for priests who have to deal with these to consider whether there are not certain kinds of work that might be entrusted to them—the superintendence of clubs, the visiting of the outcasts, or even the instruction of other converts in the more elementary stages.

(v.) It may be seen, then, as a whole, that Nonconformity corresponds very closely with the various sections of the Church of England, always excepting that of the Ritualists; and it is for this reason that it does not seem necessary to discuss them at greater length. Roughly speaking, there is no clear doctrinal difference between the average old-fashioned Nonconformist and the strict Low Churchman, or between the "New Theology" and extreme "Broadchurchism". It is the "Establishment" only that divides them. It cannot even be said that they differ as regards the doctrine of the ministry, since the Low Churchman repudiates, as warmly as any Nonconformist, belief in any exceptional grace bestowed by the bishop's hands, and to the Broad Churchman and the "New Theologian" the whole thought is simply alien. Neither does the Book of Common Prayer cause much real difference, since the Low Churchman borrows prayer-meeting methods from the Nonconformist, and the Nonconformist liturgical extracts from the Anglican. What has

been drawn out therefore at considerable length in this book, as regards the positive dogmatic standpoints of various sections of the Church of England, may be taken (with the general exceptions already noted, and particular exceptions to follow) as tolerably accurate in the case of the corresponding Nonconformist sects. It is hardly to be doubted, therefore, that in case Disestablishment should presently come about, very large portions of the Church of England would gradually find their way into communion with those who most keenly sympathize with them, but who are at present removed from them by the fact of Establishment and the spiritual drawbacks which, in the case of a National Church, are inseparable from that fact.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

(I.)

THE Congregationalists, strictly speaking, with the possible exception of the Baptists, have as a whole the most ancient right to stand for Nonconformity in the history of England. It was their spiritual predecessors who, under the name of *Independents*, comparatively early in Elizabeth's reign, carried the National idea of religion on to its next logical development, and separated themselves from the State Church as the State Church had separated itself from the Catholic. They underwent considerable persecution at the hands of the National authorities several times, and themselves retaliated to some extent under Cromwell: and it was from that community that the "Pilgrim Fathers" were drawn who founded Plymouth Colony in America. They have therefore a respectable share in history-making to their credit.

1. In regard to their theology they are not distinguished by any particular dogmas from the general scheme of common "evangelical Christianity" as represented by the Free Church Catechism, except, per-

haps, that they may be called "minimisers" with respect to all sacramental doctrine. Their positive principles are a confession of faith in the Blessed Trinity, in the Fatherhood of God, the Divinity of Jesus Christ and the redemption of the world through His death, and the inspiring and sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost. Their negative principles consist chiefly in a strong repudiation of "sacerdotalism" and of any idea of spiritual or historical continuity in the ministry, with all conclusions that would naturally flow from this. The "priesthood" of all believers is thought to be delegated by the congregation to the appointed minister. Sacramental doctrine is therefore at a very low ebb. The late Dr. Parker, one of their most eminent ministers in recent times, on one occasion, in protest against a tinge of faint clericalism that he thought he saw to be on the increase in the denomination, repeated with a good deal of vigour the Congregational principles, to the effect that there was no difference whatever in spiritual authority and power between the minister and his congregation. Many Congregational ministers make a point of dressing in lay costume on all occasions, even in the pulpit itself.

2. The distinguishing feature of the Congregationalist is that he holds that a "Church" is synonymous with a congregation. Each body of believers worshipping in one place has all the rights of such a Church, and those rights are inalienable. (There is, of course, a considerable amount of Scriptural phraseology on which they rely for this doctrine.) There is, therefore, among the Congregationalists nothing in the constitu-

tion of their body corresponding to diocesan or metropolitan government, or even to the "Conference" or "circuit-system" of the Wesleyans. The recently instituted "Congregational Union" is in no sense a withdrawal from this principle: it affords merely a central body to help on concerted action, and claims in no manner any real jurisdiction over the independent "Churches" thus united.

3. The result of this system is, of course, that there is a great deal of freedom in each congregation to develop its theological views in this or that direction as determined by the will of the minister or of the stronger spirits supposed to be under his care. It is perfectly characteristic then that the recent movement known as the "New Theology" should have as the home of its origin a Congregational chapel. If "unevangelical" developments reached a certain point it would no doubt be theoretically possible for the "Union" in particular and for the other congregations in general to sever the very slender bonds of communion uniting them with such a "Church"; but the congregational claim to stand for "liberty" and private judgment would make such an action exceedingly unpopular. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot simultaneously maintain any distinct standard of orthodoxy and repudiate any semblance of general and final authority by which alone such a standard can be imposed. The result, of course, is that peace can only be preserved by persons of peculiar views attaching themselves to a congregation where such views are at least tolerated if not preached.

4. Of sacred ceremonial in the Congregational chapels there is, of course, none. Music, however, is permitted freely, and there have been movements in a sufficiently ecclesiastical direction as to produce choirs of women dressed in surplices and mortar-boards. It is remarkable, then, and yet logically natural, that congregations of "believers" who originally united themselves for simple and "primitive" worship, in an endeavour to escape from prelacy and priestcraft and human intermediaries in religion, should have come at last to find that their "worship" consists briefly of sermons and prayers delivered by a popular preacher, interspersed by quartets sung from the organ loft. There is, however, a good deal of warm social life and endeavour amongst these bodies, and, recently, a great deal of political activity. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered on the lines common to most Nonconformists.

(II.)

There is not a great deal to be said to Congregationalists beyond what can be pointed out to all Nonconformist enquirers; but this body, perhaps, from its characteristic disciplinary arrangements, offers the best opportunity for illustrating the inevitable disappearance of all real ideas of "Revelation" if once the Protestant scheme is logically developed.

If it were really true that Christ's intention was that each congregation in each place should be an independent body, with no external authority to check or correct its doctrinal developments, we should surely

have a right to demand from Him that a miraculous agreement should unite those assemblies throughout the world; otherwise the idea of a definite and revealed body of truth, delivered by Him to His apostles and handed down through all time, must be relinquished. The only logical answer to this dilemma is that the idea of "Revelation" in the Catholic sense must be relinquished: and this is the answer given by the "New Theology". This new movement is pitilessly reasonable, granted the premises. Truth is no longer something revealed from above; it is a synthesis of conclusions arrived at from below. The Congregational system therefore affords an excellent method, *on these premises*, for arriving at the nearest that can be gained to Truth, since it supplies a large number of completely independent bodies of students and thinkers, each group of which works together on its own lines unchecked by external authority or the fear of it. But it is this very thing that many Congregationalist "Churches" resent; they complain that the "City Temple" is no longer the home of "evangelical Christianity"; and by that very complaint they show that in spite of their desire for entire independence, that independence must itself be subject to an unformulated standard which must not express itself authoritatively. They wish, as was said just now, to have it both ways. But they cannot.

Among the features of the Congregational bodies which may be treated with sympathy, perhaps the most marked is their social life. A great deal of trouble is frequently taken in their chapels to make

the worshipper feel at home; and the controlling body of each chapel has as a part of its duties the keeping in touch so far as possible with all members of the congregation. There is very little of that personal isolation and coldness of which even Catholics occasionally complain.

The Baptists.

(I.)

The origin of the Baptists is a little doubtful, but persons holding their characteristic views are found in England as early as the reign of Henry VIII under the name of Anabaptists. They formed an organized and definable body a century later; and they wielded great influence among the Puritans of the Commonwealth. They have suffered religious persecution at various times. To-day they claim, throughout the world, a membership of over six millions, and in Great Britain of nearly half a million. They are distinguished by Mr. Charles Booth in his work on the religious forces of London as being the one Nonconformist sect that works both zealously and successfully among the very poor; and their missions to the heathen are equally significant of real fervour.

1. As regards their theological and disciplinary position, they may be described as holding ordinary "evangelical Christianity" in general, and as being organized on Congregational lines. The Baptists, too, possess a "Union" of their congregations which exercises a certain authority over its members, and claims the right to recognize or repudiate the ministers of

those bodies. Until the early part of the nineteenth century there were two main divisions of the sect, the "General" (or Arminian) and the "Particular" (or Calvinistic) Baptists; these, however, are now amalgamated, and it is probably true to say that the Calvinistic element has ever since, in this as in other denominations, been tending to disappear. They are a well-organized body on the whole, compact, disciplined and fervent, and are comparatively little affected by advanced modern heterodoxy.

2. The distinguishing feature of the Baptists is that indicated by their name—viz., their attitude towards the sacrament of Baptism. They maintain the solemnity and the importance of the sacrament, although they cannot be said to regard it as more than a very significant symbol of a spiritual fact; and they administer it, under the form of immersion, only to those who have given evidence of a true "conversion". "The first duty of the saved sinner is to be baptized," runs an answer in one of their Catechisms; and again, "Baptism is immersion in water of a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ on the profession that he is a disciple of the Saviour. This immersion sets forth the fellowship of the believer with the Lord in His death (by which He puts away sin) and His Resurrection (by which He ever liveth to fulfil the Divine purpose)," [1] Infants, therefore, are excluded from it; and persons baptized in infancy by the minister of some other denomination are rebaptized on seeking entrance into

[1] "A New Baptist Catechism," by Rev. Charles Williams (Baptist Union Publication Department).

the Baptist community and manifesting the signs necessary. "Those who are old or young enough to be saved by the Lord Jesus, whatever their age, and who believe in Him, are the proper subjects of baptism." It was this teaching that brought the civil and ecclesiastical penalties down upon them in the sixteenth century; and even Luther himself repudiated it in characteristically violent language. "Who sees not in such Anabaptists," he writes, "not men possessed, but demons possessed by worse demons?"[1] It is curious, however, to notice how with these "low" views of Baptism, they yet regard its mode of administration as almost dogmatically important. "Sprinkling," runs the same Catechism, "is not baptism, for baptism means immersion." They are exceedingly strict on this point, and the candidates are always plunged completely beneath the water. The ceremony occasionally takes place in the open air. Their teaching as regards the Lord's Supper is very much the same as that held by the more orthodox of the Nonconformist bodies; and the rite is performed regularly in their chapels.

(II.)

In dealing with the Baptists it must be remembered that there is a certain proper pride of spiritual ancestry to be reckoned with. They have, after all, a history to look back upon practically as long as that of the Establishment itself, and nearly as many vicissitudes. The reason of their continuity is, no doubt, to be found in the fact that they witness to certain true spiritual

[1] Præf. in Epist. ad Galat. Opera, tom. v. p. 271.

principles; they live, as do all religious bodies, upon the truth rather than the falsehood of their system. The main idea underlying that system, may be said to be that of "spirituality" or the personal responsibility of the soul to God; even their very distortions of truth are attributable to this condition. They reject Infant Baptism, not as do the Salvation Army or the Quakers, from directly under-rating the Sacrament itself, but from denying to the infant the capacity of receiving it. Since active co-operation with grace is, in their opinion, always necessary to its reception, the infant, incapable of the one, is thought incapable of the other.

Next, it must be remembered that their appeal to the Scriptures and apostolic practice is a real appeal, though it rests upon a mistaken interpretation of the facts. There is not, amongst the Baptists, that spirit of modern "progressiveness" that is so much undermining the roots of orthodoxy elsewhere. They are old-fashioned rather than "advanced"; they appeal to the past rather than to the future. They have a real doctrinal system of a kind, which must be dealt with point by point. There is, in fact, in their spirit, a certain clarity and dogmatism which their enemies describe as "hardness"; there is not in them much of that invertebrate modernism that prevails so largely elsewhere. The late Mr. Spurgeon, with his denunciations of the "downward grade" of Nonconformist Christianity, his strong teaching of the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, "Justification," "Sanctification" and the rest, is a typical, though exceptionally strong example, of the dogmatic force of the body as a whole.

The Baptist inquirer, therefore, must be met on this platform. He is usually well acquainted with the Scriptures, and a believer in the fullness of their inspiration. He has a real notion of Christianity as a dogmatic system rather than as a "tendency" or a "spirit". He has strong views on the relations of the soul to God, and a hatred of what he considers "formalism"; he has an immense reverence for the Person of Christ, and is usually tolerably orthodox with regard to Him. And he falls even more explicitly than many other non-Catholic Christians into the fallacy of thinking that written Scriptures, and especially the words of Christ, are so obvious in their meaning as to need no authoritative interpretation. "Jesus only," runs the Catechism quoted above, "has the right to legislate for His Church. A Church or a Council should not go beyond, to exact more or less than, the word of the Lord." Finally he is a hard hitter, and something of a logician, though he has (like most Nonconformists) never thought out to the bottom the principles of Authority and Revelation. He is generally utterly convinced of his own absolute orthodoxy, and of the heterodoxy of every one else.

CHAPTER V.

THE WESLEYAN BODIES (GENERAL).

1. It was not the original intention of John Wesley that his followers should separate from the communion of the Church of England; and even at the close of his life he expressly declared that should they do so, they must no longer consider themselves his disciples. His object rather was, in forming the original Methodist Societies, to organize guilds and meetings of devout Christians in the face of the widespread lethargy and indifference of his day. He lived and died a clergyman of the Church of England. The very word "Methodist" itself denoted only the method or scheme of private devotion and life which he exhorted his followers to pursue.

He made, however, much to the wrath of his brother Charles, one fatal step, when he laid hands upon certain of his preachers and commissioned them in God's name to exercise their ministry. That he had at first no intention of ordaining them clergy in the strict sense seems fairly evident, but the words used by him with regard to his consecration of Dr. Coke as a "superintendent" or bishop, show that he receded from his earlier position. In the same passage,[1] how-

[1] Southey's "Life of Wesley," p. 472.

ever, he still maintains that it was to supplement rather than to supplant the Church of England in America that he so acted, and that he had no intention of founding a new denomination. The result, however, might have been foreseen, and even before his death in 1791 the breach of his followers with the Church of England had begun, and a new sect come into being.

2. No purpose would be served by tracing accurately the various fortunes and almost endless subdivisions of Methodism in general. Its members throughout the world are said to number about seven or eight millions of persons, its "adherents," all told, about thirty millions. These, however, are divided into numerous sects, which, once more, have agreed again so far as to send delegates year by year to an "ecumenical" conference in common. The more considerable bodies are named as follows: The "Wesleyan Methodists," the "Primitive Methodists," the "United Methodists," and, by a strange irony, the "Calvinistic Methodists"—a strange irony, since, if there was one doctrine denounced by Wesley with all the eloquence at his command, it was that of "Predestination" in the Calvinistic sense. It is claimed, however, by this denomination that its origin was contemporaneous with Wesley, and united only with some of his followers at a subsequent date. The "United Methodist Church," it may be noted, was only formed in 1907, and was the result of the amalgamation of the "Methodist New Connexion," the "Bible Christians," and the "Methodist Free Churches". The "Primitive Methodists" arose

from the expulsion of a couple of ministers a century ago from the original body on a purely disciplinary matter; and the "Wesleyan Methodists," by far the most considerable group of all, is the only body that can claim a real and continuous descent from the founder himself.

3. There is not much to distinguish the disciples of Wesley from other "evangelical" Christians, except (1) in dogma, their repudiation of the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination; (2) in discipline, their organization of the "circuit-system" for ministers; and their scheme of "class-meetings," obligatory on all "members".

A few words must, however, be said on two of these matters.

(1) The "evangelical" system of Christianity is, as has been seen in the discussion of the Free Church Catechism, tolerably orthodox on most of the fundamental doctrines of the Creed, respecting the Being of God, the Divinity of Christ (so far as that is understood); the Atonement, the forgiveness of sins, and the work of the Holy Ghost upon the individual. Wesley, however, held, too, very forcibly, the doctrines of instantaneous "conversion" and of "justification by faith"; as well as sacramental beliefs that are surprising in their intensity and fervour. As regards Baptism, he appears extraordinarily confused, asserting in one place that it accomplishes regeneration, and in another that it does not;[1] but the hymns published by his brother Charles and himself upon the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are astonishingly explicit,

[1] Southey's "Life of Wesley," pp. 320-22, and footnotes.

fervent and even Catholic in their expressions.[1] It would seem, however, that this sacramental faith has not survived in his followers; and, indeed, perhaps even in himself it was poetical rather than dogmatic.

As regards the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination, Methodism is distinguished by the formal repudiation of this on the part of its founder, even though, at the present day, it must be remembered, there are very few of the Nonconformist bodies that really accept it in its original sense. It is scarcely a "popular" doctrine, and Nonconformity is above all things "popular".

The main characteristic of Wesleyanism as first inaugurated, and as claimed to-day by its exponents, is its insistence upon the necessity of personal and individual religion. The movement began as a reaction against the appalling lethargy of the Establishment of those days, and did, as a matter of undoubted fact, an enormous amount to quicken spiritual life and awaken the sense of responsibility in its adherents. All Wesley's activities were consecrated to this end; and if it can be remembered that in their original inception the Methodist Societies were devotional guilds rather than sects, the essence of the Wesleyan claim will be better understood.

(2) The system of "class-meetings" then, peculiar to Methodism, is another example of this original in-

[1] *e.g.* "'Tis done; the Lord sets to His seal,
The word is spoke, the grace is given,
With joy unspeakable we feel
The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.
The altar streams with Sacred Blood
And all the Temple flames with God."

tention. These bore, at first, many striking resemblances to the assemblies of Catholic Christians in very primitive days. They consisted of meetings under a "class-leader" held once a week; public confession of sin was frequently made, and reconciliations were effected in cases of estrangement; here, too, cases of notorious evil-doing were openly rebuked, and, if necessary, the sinner provisionally excluded from Church fellowship. The meeting concluded with extempore prayer and a hymn or two.

This system continues to the present day with natural modifications. It could hardly be expected that the fervour and simplicity shown in the beginning could continue indefinitely; and the class-meeting of to-day seems little different from an ordinary prayer-meeting. Spiritual "experiences" are related, and thanksgivings—often no doubt slightly Pharisaic—are offered to God for grace received. It is evident, however, from this peculiarity that personal and individual religion was the object chiefly aimed at by John Wesley himself.

4. It is on this point then of *personal religion* that the priest who has to deal with inquirers from Methodism will be well advised in concentrating. It is commonly believed by Nonconformists in general that the Catholic religion is a matter of forms and ceremonies, of outward actions superstitiously believed to please God or to impetrate grace, without any internal correspondence or effort of the soul. It was, in fact, against this kind of formalism that Methodism first raised its voice in protest.

It will be well then to point out to inquirers the actual facts, to say something of the enormous wealth of Catholic teaching on the cultivation and direction of the individual soul, of the amazing degree of science devoted to this end, and, above all, of the practical system of Penance.

In Penance as frequented by devout Catholics there is indeed a "method" unsurpassed in the history of religion, without any of the notorious evils that are bound to accompany, in the long run, the practice of public confession of sin. Here, the soul can only approach the physician at all on the condition of its own absolute humility and sorrow for sin: there is no opportunity for Pharisaism; there is no danger of that scandal to weaker brethren which the experience of the Church herself discovered to lie in open acknowledgment before the congregation. In this instance—as indeed in all others—the very thing taken by the new sect as its special characteristic was already supplied in overwhelming abundance by the one Mother of men. No class-meeting, or skilful dealing with souls by the hands of amateur guides, however holy, can even approximate in usefulness and fruitfulness to that of the ordered Catholic *régime* administered by highly trained experts and directors. The "Science of Souls," in fact, has practically no existence elsewhere than in Catholicism, for in Catholicism alone is there that tradition and wealth of experience descended through the centuries, and in Catholicism alone is the training of spiritual guides and advisers insisted upon as a condition of their ministry.

So far then as a Methodist is characteristically Methodist, it is this point that should be particularly laid before him; in other matters of theology and history he may be treated as an average "evangelical" Christian.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "QUAKERS" OR "FRIENDS".

(I.)

THE "Society of Friends" is, numerically considered, comparatively unimportant, numbering at the present day considerably less than twenty thousand, all told; but their influence upon Non-Catholic thought, in the past as well as in the present, is great enough to make it necessary to say a few words upon their tenets. They were founded by *George Fox* about the middle of the seventeenth century, although their first intention was not the formation of any distinct sect.

1. First, they must be classed, generally speaking, under the title "evangelical" Christians. Their theological position, though unexpressed in any formal creed, is practically that of the least common multiple of the Nonconformist denominations, though with the marked exception of all sacramental dogma of every kind. They use no form of Baptism, and no form of the Lord's Supper; believing that all forms and ceremonies apparently instituted by Christ were of no vital importance in His eyes, and were merely unessential signs of certain deep spiritual meanings. The "baptism of the Spirit" is that inner accession of grace

to the soul by which it is led to embrace God's promises, and every meal, if eaten in recollection and devotion, sufficiently fulfils the injunctions given at the Last Supper.

2. Their characteristic doctrine is that of *Inner Illumination.* Every soul, it is believed by them, which waits humbly and quietly upon God, receives special light and grace sufficient for its needs. No ordained ministry, no liturgy, no sacramental system, is required by the believing Christian. This line of thought is carried out (or rather was, until quite recently) to its utmost logical extent. The Friends' "meeting houses" are in no sense thought to be churches; the persons who through age or experience may happen to preside are not believed to possess any ministerial commission beyond that enjoyed by all "Friends," men and women alike. The services themselves, if they may be called so, consist of the simple meeting of the members together, in an unadorned room, in silence: there is no music and no pulpit; and the only distinction made amongst the worshippers lies in the fact that a gallery, facing the body of the room, holds the "overseers," the "elders" and the "recorded ministers"[1]. There are no liturgical forms of any kind. There need not, indeed, be any outward utterance at all. Each person present, by recollectedness and "introversion," seeks to pass into the consciousness of God's presence, and there remains in silence, unless, and until, the divine impulse

[1] The "recorded ministers" (unpaid) are members of the congregation, men or women, who after having acceptably "exercised the gift of ministry," are recognized by that title.

comes upon him to make an address to his fellow-members or to engage in spoken prayer. If no such impulse comes all remain silent. (Men and women in these as in governmental matters are on terms of perfect equality.)

This, at least, is the ideal; but, as a matter of fact, in recent years, certain almost inevitable developments have taken place. (The wonder is that they did not take place sooner in the history of the sect.) The old absolute simplicity is tending to disappear; addresses and sermons are frequently prepared beforehand by those on whom the responsibility of conducting the meeting will probably fall, and there is an increasing movement in the direction of recognizing more explicitly ministerial functions.

3. Further characteristics of the Quakers are to be found in their attitude towards war and their doctrine of non-resistance. In these matters they take Christ's words in the Sermon on the Mount as obligatory upon all who claim the name of Christian—their original ideal, at least, was to do so. It is not unknown, for example, to find Quakers who refuse to pay taxes for the support of the army, and who submit without resentment or rancour to a forcible sale of their goods for the payment of these. It was also largely owing to the efforts and example of the "Friends" that the movement against slavery was successful. They have also suffered considerably in the past from persecution for conscience' sake.

(II.)

In their central doctrine—that of Inner Illumination—as well as in their repudiation of outward observances of worship, it is evident that they have a great deal in common with the school of Quietists; and there is about them, as about the writings of the Quietists, the same attractive and spiritual air. It would be a matter for wonder indeed if the almost continuous practice of the Presence of God—for that, after all, is the foundation of their interior attitude—did not have such a result. In a limited sense, then, they are extraordinarily spiritual persons.

First then, in dealing with them, this fact must be remembered. It would be a grave mistake to class them generally and vaguely as having anything in common with noisy revivalists, or those semi-political, semi-social, "religious" bodies into which so many modern Nonconformist sects appear to be gradually changing. They are an extremely retiring race—though, strangely enough, some of their members are markedly prosperous in worldly affairs; they have none of the vices of self-advertisement, they have practically no ambitions towards proselytism; they approximate far more to the Contemplative than to the Active ideal. Neither have they produced any theologians or preachers of note (such, in fact, is not their ambition); they rather resemble a quiet spiritual family desiring to serve God in peace after the manner of their fathers, unpretentiously and simply.

It is difficult, beyond this, to suggest any particular

line of argument to pursue with them; and probably most good would be done, in the earlier stages, by sympathy, and by showing that the spiritual life is at least as much a product of Catholicism as of any system of mere "introversion". Any theological discussion, until it is grasped that the outer is an expression of the inner, and can be its help rather than its hindrance, would be certainly useless. The Quaker inquirer must first be made to see that since man consists of body and soul, the sacramental idea answers to his needs far more adequately than any purely interior scheme of devotion. It is this "blind spot" in his spiritual outlook that is responsible for the defects of his system.

Next, it should be remembered, that he knows very little indeed of theology in the Catholic sense. His devotional instincts are usually orthodox; he has a strong sense of the Fatherhood of God, of the Salvation of the world through the Son, and of the constant and intimate action of the Holy Ghost upon the soul: but of dogmas, beyond these—of any conception of a Church as an ark of Salvation—or of such clearly defined doctrines such as those taught in the most elementary Catechism, he has practically no idea. Religion is for him a state of soul rather than a body of truth.

Finally, however, it should be remembered that the Quaker, when converted, usually makes a most admirable Catholic. He has learnt already certain elements of the science of prayer, though these are, of course, accompanied by the well-known dangers

incident to Quietistic methods; his is a soul of great simplicity, purity and natural obedience; and when his own well-trained character and his quiet self-control receive the grace of the sacraments and the benefits of organized Catholic worship and discipline, it is probable that he will progress rapidly and surely.

THE "SALVATION ARMY".

(I.)

It is unnecessary to say more than a few words upon the "Salvation Army," since with regard to dogma its members take their stand simply upon the common platform of "evangelical Christianity". Strictly speaking, they do not form a sect, but rather a guild within these wide limits, corresponding more or less to a Religious Order, with rules and a discipline of their own.

The "Army" was founded by Mr. Booth first in the form of a missionary movement in 1865, but became military in its character and nomenclature in 1878. Since then it has met with extraordinary success in many countries throughout the world; it possesses more than 16,000 officers, and its annual income is said to amount to a million and a half pounds. Recently it has undergone numerous developments in the direction of social enterprise; and it numbers amongst its activities, labour colonies, trading and famine depots, systems of night-shelter, and, still more recently, an "Anti-suicide Bureau".

1. Its theology is, as has been said, that common to

"evangelical Christianity"; but there are two or three points that call for particular attention.

(*a*) "Instantaneous conversion" is a doctrine on which the Army lays great stress. In the spiritual department it is this act of the will which it is sought to elicit from those to whom the members minister, and for this purpose the emotions are violently appealed to by hymn-singing, passionate preaching, and fervent extempore prayer. The essence of this conversion is that the soul should "accept Jesus Christ" as the sacrifice for sin, and cast upon Him the burden of her guilt. It is a striking fact that in these days of the "New Theology" and "broad" thought the "Army" should retain practically intact the doctrines of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the Atonement, and the merits of the Precious Blood; as well as the authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and the reality of eternal punishment.

(*b*) Neither are the abuses so common amongst those who preach "instantaneous conversion" usually to be found in the Salvation Army. The possibility of backsliding is freely acknowledged, and great stress therefore is laid upon the simple doctrines of grace, and the need for watching, prayer and the process of "sanctification" even after conversion has been accomplished. The sacraments, however, find no place in this scheme. The waving of a flag over a child has practically supplanted the administration of baptism, and the Lord's Supper is not officially celebrated by the members of the Army. There is no formal objection however to the Salvationists attending these

services in Nonconformist chapels. It is another happy feature of the system that the "converted" are encouraged to throw themselves into spiritual and philanthropic work; and the ingenuity of the Army in finding occupation for all its members, though under vigorous supervision, is remarkable.

2. The organization of the "Army" is magnificent, and corresponds, as has been said, very closely to that of a missionary Religious Order. The costume, on military lines, is well known; and military titles are borne by the officers of the various grades, whether men or women. Obedience also is strictly insisted upon, and the disciplinary rules (for example, the prohibition of alcohol and tobacco) are severely enforced. Extempore prayers, with addresses on Scripture and an abundance of hymn singing, form the devotional exercises of the Army even in private. The phraseology used in these and in public meetings is deliberately startling, and at first even offensive; yet it is comparatively harmless, and often forms a safeguard of orthodoxy.

3. Finally, great praise is due to the admirable social work done by the "Army" especially among the outcast population of the great cities. This work is sensible and business-like in its objects and methods, and the officers are in consequence often entrusted by magistrates with the care of some of the more hopeless cases brought before them. Emigration-work is forming more and more a feature of the activity of the Army.

(II.)

It will be perceived then that it is in defect rather than in positive error that the Salvation Army goes astray. Its members retain a most satisfactory orthodoxy on many fundamental points of the Christian religion; and their personal devotion to our Blessed Lord, and their readiness to undergo ridicule and to sacrifice themselves in His Name, are points that should be noticed and esteemed. In these points, as in the practice of the active virtues and of prayer, they have little to learn. They have even been said to resemble in many characteristics, and with some justice, the first followers of St. Francis. They are markedly charitable to other denominations and have very little of the narrow and separatist spirit amongst them. Their hostility to and distrust of the Catholic Church—a spirit occasionally but not frequently shown—is due entirely to simple ignorance of the aims and essence of Catholicism, and to a belief that that religion stands for formalism and superstition.

In theological matters then they resemble children who have learned excellently a few letters of the alphabet and who repeat them over and over again with the very limited vocabulary consequently at their disposal. There is very little which they have to unlearn, except the disproportions of their faith, and the way to their hearts lies undoubtedly in that which is the very essence of their own religion—fervent faith and devotion towards Jesus Christ as the One Saviour of men.

THE "IRVINGITES," OR "THE CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH".

(I.)

A few remarks are necessary upon the denomination known as "Irvingite," not so much because of its numerical or religious importance, as from the extraordinary zeal and perseverance shown by its members in the face of great discouragement, and the very strange and bewildering claims made by them. They are drawn from all classes of society, and have the peculiarity among modern nonconforming denominations of possessing an exceedingly elaborate ritual and a high sacramental doctrine.

1. They were founded by Edward Irving, a deposed Presbyterian minister, in 1835. The belief of the founder, supported by others who claimed the gift of "prophesying," was that it was the intention of Jesus Christ to restore through him the Apostolic College, as a preparation for the Second Coming which was to take place in the immediate future. Twelve men were designated as "Apostles," the last of whom, a Mr. Woodhouse, died at an advanced age a few years ago; and it was through these that the new denomination was controlled. It was commonly held by the Irvingites that the Second Coming would take place before the last of the "Apostles" passed away; but subsequent "prophecies" have reassured them that it will not, even now, be long deferred.

2. The nomenclature used by the body is remarkable. Their officials bear the names of "angels,"

"prophets," "evangelists," "pastors," "elders" and "deacons". Of these the "prophets" are the most interesting, since it is claimed that these exercise the restored "gift of tongues," and communicate divine messages to their hearers. The "prophecies" are exchanged amongst the different branches of the denomination, and are said to correspond remarkably one with another.

3. Doctrinally, the Irvingites do not differ greatly from the High Church section of the Anglican Establishment. They accept the idea of sacerdotalism to the fullest extent, believe in the Real Presence, reserve the Sacrament, and anoint the sick with consecrated oil. Further, their liturgy is beautiful and dignified; its words are drawn chiefly from Catholic sources, from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, and from Eastern service books: it includes the use of incense and holy water. A great feature of their system lies in their belief in the Millennium, in which "the saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years," beginning at the immediately expected Second Advent.

4. The body is not, in intention, at all exclusive or separatist. It stands, not so much as a rival to other Christian bodies, as to supply a position of further advancement and initiation. Its members acknowledge the validity of both the Anglican and the Catholic ministry, and it is possible for Anglican clergy, it is said, to hold ministerial positions both in the Establishment and in the Irvingite body simultaneously. It need hardly be said, however, that this is extremely rare, if ever it has been an actual fact. They form a

very peaceful and quiet society, and are distinguished for their fervour and vivid faith as well as for their charity. A magnificent church belonging to them stands in London, in Gordon Square. Small changes take place from time to time in their liturgy and ceremonial; but their main lines are those which have been described.

(II.)

The primary difficulty in dealing with them is that of course found in dealing with any who like these—the Swedenborgians, the Pentecostal dancers, the Mormons and the rest—believe themselves to have received a special Revelation from God. In no sense are the Irvingites, consciously at least, a development of any preceding process; they constitute a new body with a new commission and authority from heaven.

Two or three points, however, may be mentioned.

1. The main feature of their system is their belief in a restored Apostolate. They realize, and quite rightly, that Apostolic authority is more than mere Episcopal authority; and their claim is that they alone have understood this. It may be pointed out, therefore, to them with advantage that the exercise of Apostolic authority has been the governing principle of the Catholic Church through all the centuries, and it was the rejection of this principle that caused the schismatic movements both in East and West. The Pope, in short, has actually exercised the Apostolic authority, he imparts the "Apostolic Benediction," and, in the name of Peter on whom Christ built His Church, he has, as the residuary legatee of the plenitude of Apos-

tolic power, governed the Church since the days of Jesus Christ. In the Vicar of Christ and the Successor of St. Peter, there is, therefore, and has always been, exactly the element which Edward Irving believed himself especially raised up to restore. And it is further part of the faith of Catholic Christendom that, whenever the Second Advent of Christ may take place, there will be found upon earth that Apostolic ministry still continuing. In this the earlier Irvingite instinct was perfectly right; it was but the embodiment of that instinct which was wrong.

2. Of destructive criticisms of the Irvingite system there is, of course, an abundance. It may be pointed out with advantage that the universal belief amongst them that the Second Advent would take place before the death of the last of the "apostles" has not been justified; that the mission Irving believed himself to have received from heaven to communicate his revelation to the rest of Christendom has met with a really startling ill-success, since there are not at the present day more than 50,000 of his followers existing in the world, and that the mark of "Catholicity" therefore is remarkably absent from his denomination. Destructive criticism, however, cannot accomplish much: it would seem to be far better to use the Catholic system, and the fact of the continuity and expansion of the Church, as a natural dissolvent, and to draw the inquirer by positive rather than by negative teaching. It may be added that Irvingites are usually exceedingly friendly and sympathetic towards Catholics, and acknowledge that next to their own denomination the Catholic Church is the nearest to the truth.

CHAPTER VII.

MODERN "MYSTICS".

A BOOK professing to deal with the principal religious organizations of England, with members of which priests are occasionally brought into contact, would not be complete without at least a few paragraphs upon that group of communities that claim, and to some extent deserve, the name of modern mystics. Such are the "Theosophists," the "Christian Scientists" and the "Mind-healers". Neither can such communities be dismissed as Non-Christian, since it is possible, and indeed usual for a certain proportion of their members to adhere, at least for a while, to historical Christianity, although, in the long run, they seldom continue to do so. In each of these three denominations or groups it is customary to assure proselytes that there is nothing to hinder the continued practice of Christianity, that the new teachings merely afford fresh light upon the old dogmas, and that they supply again those elements that, once in the Christian Church, have disappeared with the lapse of ages.

"THEOSOPHY."

Theosophy, in its widest sense, claims to represent that more or less secret, mystical and esoteric body of

truth which lies behind all religions and creeds, Christian and Non-Christian alike—to be that distilled essence of pure religion with respect to which exoteric dogma is, so to say, the flavouring and colouring matter, added in the various creeds for the sake of commending it to popular taste. It is not, then, in itself, Christian, any more than it is Buddhist or Confucian : in fact its more recent professors declare that Hinduism (or some, Buddhism) in its phraseology, its practices and its "dogmas" is better suited for the presentment of Theosophical ideas than is Christianity. It is not, however, identical with Hinduism or with any Eastern philosophy in any exclusive sense. Proselytes, at least in the earlier stages, are informed that Christianity, too, will serve as the framework of the picture ; that there is no incompatibility between studying Theosophy and continuing in communion with any Christian denomination ; and that Jesus Christ may be regarded in a real sense as Incarnate God, and His teachings as Divine.

(1) The Creed of Theosophy is, in a word, Pantheism—although, of course, owing to the unpleasant associations connected with the word, the label is stoutly repudiated. God is conceived of as the One self-existing Being, the origin and the end of all that is, the One Being manifested in a myriad ways under all forms of secondary life. Man is His highest incarnation on earth ; but all forms of life are also divine. It is the ultimate goal of all life to return to its Source, and be reabsorbed in It. This End may be named, equally well, Nirvana or the Beatific Vision. Its

essence consists in the elimination of all that divides consciousness from consciousness, and in the realization, instead, of the One Divine Consciousness, perfect and eternal.

(2) "Sin" therefore is Selfishness; it is all that tends to withdraw man from his final End, to centre man in himself, or to attach him to that which is lower than the highest. Passion, attachment, and the like are the supreme enemies; for they tend to retain the Divine Spirit in the lower planes, to plunge it and fetter it among the complications of *Maya*, or "illusion". Since God is the only "Real," all other than God is comparatively unreal. Complete and absolute indifference to the things of sense, the cessation of all secondary desire, the intense and fixed realization of man's essential unity with God—this is the process of illumination and development.

(3) Asceticism, therefore, from Manichæan reasons, is the way of life for the Theosophist—not necessarily, or so much, physical abstention as interior detachment. Marriage therefore is discouraged, though not forbidden; meat-eating and the drinking of alcohol are equally reproved, since by these man's lower appetites are stimulated and sustained, to the hindrance of his higher development. Prayer, in the sense of petition, is considered childish and elementary; meditation, however, directed towards intense "introversion," the finding of God in self, and the elimination of all except this consciousness of union with the Divine, is essential to all progress.

(4) The universe is governed primarily by the law

of *Karma* or Consequence—the law by which every action has its inevitable result—from which there is no dispensation or escape. There is no "forgiveness" with God, in the proper sense, no "mercy" except that passionless mercy which urges and permits every conscious will, however degraded, to begin again the life of progress upwards. There is no guilt—in the sense used by Christians—as against a Personal God; there are but consequences, inevitable and sure. There is no Sovereign Will which by an act of favour can release the lower embodiment of itself from the consequences of its actions.

This law then of *Karma* must be worked out on earth, either in the present incarnation of any individual, or in another. Re-incarnation, therefore, is as much a dogma amongst the Theosophists, as can any statement be amongst those who repudiate dogma in the ordinary sense. It is certainly usually believed by them to be the explanation of the apparent injustice in the world, and of the mystery of Pain.

(5) As regards the Great Masters—those individuals such as Buddha or Mohammed or Christ, or those still more mysterious persons, called Mahatmas, who, it is said, live in the East—there is no essential difference of kind between these and ordinary men. All are alike "sons of God," or rather, incarnations of the Divine Spirit. Those, however, who are eminent for spirituality are those who after countless lives of effort become the teachers and saviours of society—some, even, in their charity for men, persons who are so utterly free from passion and attachment as to have merited Nirvana, but

who yet have delayed their entrance into glory in order to help their brethren. In this manner it is possible for the "Christian Theosophist" still to retain orthodox language in speaking of Jesus Christ. He is still to them a Saviour, an Incarnation of God, "of one substance with the Father," born of a Virgin, crucified, dead, risen and ascended. In fact to those—of whom there are a few, especially among the proselytes in the lower stages of initiation—who regard Jesus Christ as the highest embodiment of spiritual and moral life ever manifested among men, it is possible to speak of Him as *the* Son of God, *the* Divine Saviour and Redeemer; to frequent the sacraments of various Christian denominations, and to regard them with almost a Catholic's veneration.

(6) It is claimed—and there is little doubt that there is some truth in the claim—that those who by contemplation and asceticism in the Theosophist method conquer their animal desires, gain a certain personal power resembling that of the saints. The powers of the intellect and the soul—especially those called "psychical"—by concentration, effort and continual practice, become obedient to the will to a remarkable degree, and can be exercised effectively upon others. It is further claimed—but of this there is, of course, no verifiable public evidence—that there is practically no limit to these powers, even over inanimate nature. In this manner Theosophists freely accept and explain the miracles recorded of Christ, Buddha and the Saints. It may be said, in this connexion, that the Theosophists occupy a precisely opposite position to that of "Liberal"

Christians. The "Liberal" tends to take as his starting point the natural world of phenomena and law, and to explain, if possible, the miraculous by those axioms; the Theosophist begins with the supremacy of spirit, and has no difficulty whatever in allowing events that are distinctly "miraculous" regarded from the natural plane.

(7) As regards the constitution of the material world, the Theosophist lays great stress upon what is known as the "astral" plane. There is, he says, occupying a position between pure spirit and pure matter, an æther or medium which he names "astral". The "astral" has, so to speak, something of the liberty of spirit, with something of the phenomena of matter. For example, man possesses a body on the physical plane, that which can be handled and touched, but he possesses also an "astral" body, usually dormant and undetachable, possessing, practically, those qualities of agility, permeability and the rest, such as are in Catholic theology attributed to the body of the Resurrection. It is by the action of this body, when detached under such circumstances as death or trance or the deliberate effort of the adept, that phantoms, clairvoyance, and other phenomena known to psychologists, are explained. The Resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ, bi-location, and countless other appearances and actions, are classed also under this head. The astral plane then is the meeting-ground of the two worlds: the most evanescent thought or emotion generated by the mind works upon that plane its inevitable and ineradicable result: much more do the

deliberate efforts of the adept, who by this medium accomplishes his will for good or evil.

(8) Finally, it may be said that the Theosophists represent a fluctuating rather than a rigid body of religionists. They have developed considerably in their range and methods of thought since *Madame Blavatsky* first made the subject known to the Western public—and their development has been away from rather than towards Christianity. They have split more than once, and that recently, into various bodies between whom relations are scarcely cordial; and there are a good many divergences between these schools on minor points. They are, however, roughly agreed on the principal matters which have been described, and claim to possess also a considerable body of secret teaching with which only adepts are fully acquainted. In fact they present an extraordinary resemblance along various lines—historical, ethical and dogmatic to the early Gnostics. They are a widely spread body, with established centres in America and India as well as in most European countries; and they exercise an influence outside of their own professed members. The recent schism that has taken place was caused by a divergence between the members with respect to certain ethical teaching given by one of the leaders to children under his charge.

In dealing with Theosophists there are three or four points important to remember.

(1) Their chief moral difficulty—as must be the case of all who have ever claimed esoteric knowledge—is

intellectual and spiritual pride. The world of men is, for them, roughly divided between the initiated and the uninitiated—those who, respectively, see beneath the symbol or sacrament, and those who do not. There is no conception with them of the fact that Revelation, properly considered, breaks down this wall of division that undoubtedly existed in ancient times; and that it is of the very essence of Revelation to reveal, to all who receive it. That there are, of course, differences in insight and intuition among various persons, is not, of course, denied by the Church; but Theosophists go much farther than this, and deny implicitly that simple faith and obedience, without insight, is of avail. It is inevitable, therefore, that those who consider themselves "initiated" should tend to regard insight as of more value than the merely moral attitude towards God.

(2) A second difficulty is that which beset the early Gnostics and especially the Manichæans. When once this superior insight is thought to constitute the essence of true religion; when once the centre of gravity is thought to rest in the "things of the Spirit" instead of—as in Christianity—in a point between body and soul so that each shares in the affairs of the other, the body and the things of the body become, so to speak, comparatively unimportant—or rather are considered to be merely so many obstacles, instead of helps, to the progress of the soul. Accordingly, therefore, there is a tendency among all Gnostics to err in one of two directions. Either the body is considered—since it is a contemptible dead-weight upon the soul—as something to be tortured and crushed and despised; or it is

thought to be so utterly apart from the soul's true life that it may be indulged and relaxed to any extent. Morality, therefore, *theoretically speaking*, is always in danger.

(3) On the other hand, Theosophists are wonderfully alive to what may be called the more mysterious and spiritual elements in the Catholic Religion. By their training and methods of thought their point of view becomes such that dogmas, which to materialists are the supreme obstacles in the way of faith, are to them actually credentials of the Church's claim. They do not, for example, find the smallest difficulty in sacramental doctrine, Transubstantiation, or the Sacramentals of the Church.[1] Many of them, in fact, go so far as to say that the Catholic Church possesses spiritual power in an extraordinary and unique degree, but that she does not understand it. This leads, therefore, either to extreme hostility towards her as the one rival they have to fear (as was the case with Madame Blavatsky), or to extreme sympathy and courtesy, as to their one friend in a materialistic and spiritually powerless age. Theosophists cannot, therefore, be treated as mere ignorant outsiders. There are certain points of view that they understand far better than many uneducated Catholics; on the other hand, it is extremely rare to find among them a capacity for that simplicity and obedience and submission that is the foundation of the moral life of faith.

[1] It was the custom at one time of certain Theosophists living in Rome to visit the churches in order to "test" the holy water. They asserted that all holy water possessed a real spiritual influence; but that the degree of influence varied with the psychical powers of the priest who consecrated the water.

"Christian Science."

The "Christian Scientists," founded by Mrs. Eddy, an American woman who, it is claimed, is still alive, form a sect, increasing rapidly in all English-speaking countries, and of a very considerable wealth and influence.

It is utterly impossible, however, to do more than give the very roughest outline of their tenets, since there has never probably been devised a creed claiming the name of "Christian" of a more indefinable and unintelligible nature. Probably, too, in no other denomination have the distinctively Christian elements sunk to so low an ebb. Christian phraseology is used by these religionists, and the *letter* of Scripture held by them in great veneration; but the interpretation put upon the Scriptures, and the ideas connoted by the phraseology are of such a character as to deprive them of all such meanings as have, historically, been put upon them.

1. "*Christian Science*," like Theosophy, would appear to be largely Pantheistic. God, it is said, is the One and only Reality: all that is not God is therefore "unreal". Now, God in Himself is pure Good, there is in Him neither pain nor sin. Pain and sin, therefore, are unrealities and illusions.

2. Secondary causes appear to be unrecognized by "Christian Scientists"—unrecognized, that is, to the extent of their capacity to produce realities. Since God is the only Cause—or rather, since God is all that is, nothing can exist truly and really except God;

and all else that appears to exist only appears, and is produced, so far as it has an appearance, by what is called "Mortal Mind". Hence we have these illusions and unrealities of pain and sin; they exist only so far as we recognize them: if, therefore, we can, wholly and entirely, cease to recognize them they cease, in every sense, to exist. "Mortal Mind," then, is the supreme enemy: if we can but conquer this by "demonstrating truth," and realize our absolute and essential identity with Him who is All-Good, pain, disease, sin, and even death itself cease for us at once.

3 At present, however, there is still sufficient "Mortal Mind" in the world to counteract to a large extent the "demonstrations" of the initiated. Death, pain, or disease and sin are still strong enough—in the plane of mortal mind, so to speak—to carry on their work. If all the world accepted wholly "Christian Science," and lived up to it, these things would cease. Meanwhile the weight of Mortal Mind is sufficient to counterbalance the Truth even among "Christian Scientists" themselves; they die, therefore, like the rest of us, suffer, sin and collapse. It is claimed, however, that this ought not to be so; and failure in these respects results from a lack of perfect faith and confidence.

4. Further, it is claimed that by "demonstrating" the truth, diseases—(or rather the illusions which we call diseases)—are, as a matter of fact, continually cured by "Christian Science". Considerable fees are charged for this process of treatment. It consists of the putting of himself by the patient under the charge

of a professed Healer, who proceeds, partly by talk and partly by interior effort and assertion, to vindicate the sole reality of God—who is All Good—and to destroy the illusions produced by "Mortal Mind". When this attitude of mind is sufficiently established in the patient, he perceives for himself that his disease has no existence, and acts upon that perception. (Instances have occasionally come before the public notice in which this disregard of sickness has ended, naturally enough, in the death of the patient.)

5. As to the relations of this creed with that of historical Christianity, even in the widest sense, it is yet more difficult to speak. Certainly Christian phrases are used; yet it is absolutely clear that both *de Deo* and *de Divinitate Christi* nothing even approaching Catholic doctrines is held. "God" is considered to be, practically speaking, identical with all that truly exists; and Christ no more than a manifestation of Him, supreme, indeed, yet with no difference of kind between His personality and that of men. Mrs. Eddy, in her book "Science and Health"—the single authorized text-book of the sect—categorically denies the Atonement.

6. No method can be discerned in the exegesis of Scripture followed by "Scientists". The method appears to be perfectly arbitrary, and to lie along "mystical" lines. Even names and places mentioned in the Scriptures are said to have a meaning completely other than those universally put upon them. ("Gihon," for instance, is taken to stand for the recognition of women's rights).

7. No sacramental doctrine, of course, finds any place in this scheme of belief—since the very existence of matter itself is denied. In fact "Christian Science" as a whole, in these relations as in all others, is perhaps the furthest development possible in the direction of pure Protestantism in its earlier stages. The letter of Scripture is still treated with an immense veneration, but is used almost wholly as a quarry from which materials may be detached and fashioned into perfectly arbitrary forms. The Incarnation and the Atonement have disappeared; the Sacraments, the Catholic Church—in fact all that may be called specifically Christian—have left not even a trace behind; and the principle of Private Judgment has grown, by a very natural process, into the unquestioned and autocratic authority of Mrs. Eddy herself, unrestrained by tradition or any historical articles of faith. Mr. "Mark Twain" indeed, in his book on the subject, represents the foundress of this denomination as occupying a position in it comparable only to that of the Vicar of Christ in the Catholic Church; and goes so far as to maintain that, in the comparatively near future, Mrs. Eddy and the Pope will divide between them the allegiance of professed Christendom.

The method best suited for dealing with Christian Scientists is even more impossible to state than any coherent form of their philosophy. It is said indeed by some who have left the denomination that the power of "suggestion," or of the control exercised over proselytes through the concentrated powers of the minds of the leaders, is scarcely less than that of

hypnotism itself. Even when the preposterous nature of the philosophy is detected, there yet remains a retaining influence that for a long while colours the thought of the ex-disciple. Time only can cure this.

Controversy with "Christian Scientists" is very nearly an impossibility; there are practically no common axioms of philosophy, or even of language on which a beginning can be made—no platform of thought on which the controversy can be held. Scripture is held up by them as of Divine authority, yet the plainest statements of Scripture, and still more the sense put upon Scripture by practically the whole of Christendom, are denied or interpreted away. Finally, if a conclusion is reached in the argument which is contrary to that of Christian Science the adversary is told that he is carnally minded and that "spiritual things are spiritually discerned".

It would seem then that argument in the scholastic method—in fact even argument as it is usually understood by educated people—is wholly useless. It is not by logic that the "Scientist" defends his beliefs, and it is not by logic therefore that he can be convinced against them. The one hope would seem to lie in the presentation to him of the Catholic creed in its entirety as a coherent and intelligible whole, appealing as it does not to one fancied "spiritual sense," but to the man taken altogether—head, heart and will. Something may indeed be done by exposing the extraordinary intellectual fallacies and self-contradictions of Mrs. Eddy's writings, but not much. It is rather by ex-

hibiting a positive body of truth that the lacunæ in the "Scientist's" thought can best be met.[1]

The Mind-Healers.

There is at the present day in the Christian world an immense movement of thought towards the subject of "spiritual" or mind-healing. Psychologists on one side are exploring farther and farther the relations of mind and matter, and are beginning to classify, practically for the first time, certain sets of phenomena which in the past have usually been set down to the agency either of God or of the devil; and Christians on the other side are beginning to see in this development a call to themselves to exercise in the name of Christ these powers, newly labelled by science as "subjective" or "subliminal".

1. Briefly, the psychologists' claim is that the union between mind and matter is far more potent and far-reaching than has been suspected in the past. Experiments have been conducted with a view of showing that if the mind is sufficiently concentrated upon an idea, whether by external or auto-suggestion, it can so affect the body as to bring about a change of material tissue. For instance, a boy, under hypnotism, lays his hand upon an unlighted stove; he is then informed that the stove is red hot; he withdraws his hand with a cry of pain, and a blister presently makes its appearance. The reverse therefore is also true; and diseases of a certain order, at least, can be cured by the same means of "suggestion".

[1] Perhaps the best work hitherto published on the subject is Dr. Lambert's "Christian Science" (Christian Press Association Publishing Company, New York).

It is not to the point here to examine how far such a claim is justified—except to say that undoubtedly the psychologists have their finger upon a real truth. It finds a certain echo even in such words of our Lord as "Thy faith hath saved thee".[1] Next, many psychologists are agreed that the most forcible motive power in "suggestion" is found in the "religious idea," and they deliberately employ this idea even if they do not believe in its objective contents. The miracles at Lourdes, for example, are thus explained; it is even conceivable, some would say, that wounds can be healed instantaneously, if only the religious impression is strong enough; and they deny entirely that the miracles are evidences of anything except of this religious impression, and their own theories.

Non-Catholic Christians, therefore, have rushed into the fray, and claimed that, however these things may be labelled and explained away, the power has always been inherent in the Christian body, that such signs as these were laid down by the Divine Founder of Christianity as evidences of His own and His disciples' spiritual power; and that Christians at least ought not to be behindhand in welcoming and using these recently rediscovered forces. The movement has gone so far as to result in the establishment of at least one "Home" in London where patients can be treated by the imposition of hands and prayer; and as a whole it may be said that the movement is making a wide and profound impression.

[1] But it must be noted that the miracle is one in which the "virtue" of the Healer is expressly mentioned.

2. Catholics, therefore, ought to be acquainted with the facts, with the very solid evidence that is put forward, and with the theories promulgated in explanation. They ought further to have some idea in their own minds as to the attitude to be taken up with regard to the movement.

(1) If the psychologist's theory is examined closely it will be seen that it consists of little more than a set of new labels placed upon truths which the Catholic Church has always recognized. That "faith" enters largely into all such cures is a commonplace of theology. Of our Lord Himself it is recorded that "He could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief"; and again even when His own "virtue" is emphasized in a miracle, He yet declares to the woman who was healed that it was her "faith" which saved her. The same element of faith enters into all Catholic dealings with the soul, even, to some extent, in the effects of the Sacraments wrought *ex opere operato.*

It may be conceded at once, therefore, that the element of faith is an important part of the process even in many cures wrought undoubtedly by the power of God.

It remains, however, to be asked further, What is the second element always present in faith-cures, without which they cannot be accomplished? Faith by itself, even according to the psychologists, cannot be the sole and all-embracing force, since it is limited by certain conditions: faith, *in their view*, cannot literally move mountains; it can only affect organic matter which is, already, normally in relations with the agent mind. There have to be present, then, besides faith,

certain other conditions—a certain state of things, the action of a law. In short, there has to be present in all faith-cures an element which Christians would call the Divine action or permission. It is only by obscurity of thought that it can be said that faith, in itself, is the sole condition.

So far, therefore, it would appear as if there were no obstacle to the Catholic's acceptance of many of the recent psychological conclusions. It is not, as if, so to speak, God had been driven out of the field; a mysterious force has to be present in all such healing, no less than the faith of the healed. The utmost that the psychologists have done is (1) to recognize for the first time facts which the Church has known and used for twenty centuries; (2) to make perfectly legitimate scientific discoveries in those relations which fall under their proper dominion, and to invent some new terms for their identification. The Church remains unaffected, except so far perhaps as her purely human theories have had to be modified as regards the evidential value of a few particular kinds of cases. There still remain as evidences of her divine mission: (1) the fact that she has used these powers for centuries—even though some of those powers may now be conceded as "natural"; (2) those many other kinds of miracles, equally established, for which psychology has no explanation at all.

(2) The Mind-healers, as such, have no peculiar creed; they have, rather, tendencies; and some of these tendencies are distinctly dangerous. The most dangerous of all, however, is that which leads them to

believe that a healthy body is very nearly essential to the possession of a healthy soul. Its further development is found in the modern belief that environment and education are responsible for such good and evil as are in the world to-day, and in the consequent denial of the free action of the human will and of human responsibility.

Now it is perfectly true that our Lord wrought bodily cures in evidence of His Divine Mission, and that the perfection of man's nature, bodily as well as spiritual, is the Divine ideal; but it may be pointed out with advantage to those obsessed with a passion for bodily perfection *in this world*, that the central devotion of Christendom is the Crucifix rather than the Resurrection-glory, and that, in a fallen world, a tortured and distorted body may be the tabernacle of a soul that is even better conformed to the Divine image than even the most effective soul in a sane body.

There is a real danger in this modern movement that asceticism and self-denial and sickness—the disciplining of the body whether by human or Divine deliberation—may come to be regarded to be as much "foolishness" as was the Crucifix itself amongst the highly polished Greeks. While, therefore, Catholics have no quarrel with the Mind-healing movement as such, it must be remembered that this movement, like all such others, is accompanied by tendencies which, if not balanced and restrained must act to the injury of the highest spiritual life.

(3) It may finally be pointed out with advantage that the Catholic Church, accused in this instance, as

in so many others, of being behind the times, is, as a matter of fact the one Christian denomination in the West that has retained through all the centuries a sacrament which has as its first object the healing of the body by Divine action; and that those who so freely accuse her of lack of sympathy with an obviously Apostolic practice, have, as a matter of fact, allowed it to fall out of use.

The Spiritualists.

This section on Modern Mystics would not be complete without a few words on a sect which, in the opinion of some competent judges, is to be in the future the most dangerous opponent that Catholicism will have to meet.

Spiritualism, as least in the form of Necromancy, is very nearly as old as religion itself. It has passed through countless phases, and has attached itself, more or less, to nearly every known form of belief; but its main features have always been practically identical with those of the present day, and of the movement which began in America about the middle of the last century.

The main thesis of Spiritualism is as follows:—

The spiritual world, it is said, is in close contact with this, and can be reached and communicated with intelligibly, sensibly and even tangibly, under certain conditions. The chief of these conditions is that faculty known as "mediumistic". The "medium" is a person who, while not differing essentially from ordinary human beings, has certain faculties and

powers highly developed. He is one who, by passing into a passive or trance-state, can be controlled by discarnate spirits who desire to communicate with their friends or disciples on earth.

The communications take place in various ways.

First, there are actions such as the movement of furniture, the production of sounds, the appearance of lights, by which the inquirers are satisfied that more than human incarnate personalities are at work. These things are usually performed during a "séance" —that is the meeting of the inquirers together in a room wholly or partly darkened, in the company of the *medium.*

Next there are the intelligible communications made to one or more of the sitters, by which, it is said, the communicating spirit may be identified, and may give messages or spiritual instructions. These conversations are carried on either by means of taps, produced apparently by other than human agency and interpreted according to a received code, or by the voice of the controlled *medium;* or by the action of his hand through writing; or by "spirit writings" under conditions that would appear to exclude fraud or hallucination.

Thirdly, there is the phenomenon known as "materialization". This consists of the appearance of the spirit in human form, sometimes in such a degree as to be actually tangible as well as capable of being photographed. It is in this that the supreme achievement of Spiritualism is said to lie; and it is by the recognition of the spirit's features that his personality is finally identified.

As to the explanation given by Spiritualists of the methods by which these things are done, it will be enough to refer the reader to the previous remarks made upon the "astral force". The body in which the spirit is said to appear, is supposed to have been fashioned by himself, if circumstances have been sufficiently favourable, out of the "astral matter" drawn from the body of the *medium* and his companions. It disintegrates at the close of the phenomenon, and passes back again for the most part into the source from which it was drawn.

2. Now it is utterly impossible within the limits of a few pages to discuss the evidence for or against the reality of those phenomena. It is necessary for those who would wish to have any success in dealing with Spiritualists to be acquainted far more fully than is possible from this book with the arguments on both sides. Many excellent books have been written upon the subject by those who have studied the facts. The one attitude to be deplored is that taken up by many Catholics and even by priests, consisting of simple mockery at the whole affair, and of a few shallow *a priori* arguments and jokes against the idea of the possibility of any spirits at all communicating with men by such means. It may further be remarked that those who talk in this way have the whole body of theologians dead against them.

(1) First, however, it must be acknowledged that there is hardly any branch of "religion" in which fraud has been so often exposed. Not once nor twice, but repeatedly, mediums have been detected in the use

of trickery, either conscious or unconscious, by which the phenomena have been simulated. It is this, no doubt, that has encouraged ignorant people to the conclusion that all the phenomena are always attributable to this means.

(2) It would be to no purpose, therefore, to discuss as to how far in this or that instance fraud has been at work. It is enough to say in this place that several scientists of repute, both English and foreign, are completely satisfied that fraud will not explain all; and that certain of those scientists, hitherto materialists, have been convinced by means of Spiritualism of the existence of the spiritual world and of the survival after death of the human personality.

3. There remains to be examined, very shortly, the chief Catholic reasons against the Spiritualist's claims, and the arguments that may best be put forward in controversy against them.

(1) It is of practically no use in controversy with Spiritualists to advance the ordinary theological arguments against either the existence of "astral" force and matter, or against the possibility of *human* discarnate spirits thus communicating with friends and disciples on earth. The Spiritualists deny the premises *in toto:* they claim that through these actual and direct communications with the inhabitants of the other world, they are better acquainted with the conditions that prevail there than can be any theologian who begins from an *a priori* dogmatic standpoint.

(2) Neither is it of any value in Spiritualists' eyes that the whole tendency of the "spirits'" teaching is

usually anti-Christian. For they claim that here is a direct revelation from the other world sanctioned by far more grave, and more accessible, evidences than those of the Christian religion. It is true that in the first stages the inquirer is permitted to believe and practise his own religion, and even encouraged to pray and sing hymns at the very séance itself; it is true, also, that in some cases Spiritualism and Christianity (of a kind) continue to be held simultaneously by the same person even through many years: yet the general trend is undoubtedly anti-Christian, and leads in a thousand instances to the relinquishing of all specifically Christian tenets.

(3) Far more effective in controversy are certain undoubted facts, many of them acknowledged and lamented even by Spiritualists themselves.

(*a*) First there is always present in Spiritualism the danger of nervous strain so great as to bring about in innumerable instances physical or mental ruin. (Mr. Raupert in his books on the subject[1] gives various testimonies to this effect from Spiritualists themselves; and Dr. Forbes Winslow in his book "Spiritualistic Madness" frankly attributes an enormous proportion of cases confined in lunatic asylums to this tampering with the supernatural.) If the "communicating intelligences" were what they professed to be, and if the practice of Spiritualism were beneficial to humanity, it is hardly likely that this danger should be so inevitably associated with it. It is not only the mediums who

[1] "Modern Spiritism," "The Dangers of Spiritualism" (Kegan Paul).

so suffer, but occasionally the sitters themselves, and to such an extent that a complete mental breakdown is always a possibility, with its end in the asylum. It is true that statistics on this matter may easily be discredited by the statement that a large proportion of Spiritualistic inquirers are already mentally feeble; but this argument is scarcely to the advantage of the cult. So far does this mental, and occasionally moral, deterioration go, that those who suffer from it often exhibit to an extraordinary degree the symptoms usually held to be indicative of demoniacal possession; and, in fact, in the opinion of many Catholic authorities, this is by far the most tenable explanation of the more extreme cases.

(*b*) A second argument, undeniable by Spiritualists themselves, is the constant frequency with which the most subtle and heartless deceptions are practised by the "communicating intelligences" themselves upon those who in perfectly good faith come to consult them. The standard books upon Spiritualism supply sufficient examples of this to justify the advancement of the argument. Again and again there are detected instances of deliberate impersonation on the part of these intelligences who profess to come only for the benefit of the human race—impersonation which is only exposed after repeated tests. If, as is confessed by Spiritualists themselves, it is often exceedingly difficult to separate the "genuine" from the lying spirits, Spiritualism can scarcely be described as a satisfactory method of arriving at perfect truth.

(*c*) A third argument is found in the violent contra-

dictions to be found in the "spiritual teachings" imparted at various times to different inquirers. Dr. Lapponi thus describes the result of his investigations into this point.[1] "In England the spirits are sceptical, discursive and cautious; in Germany, mystical, speculative and transcendental, and in France, libertines, generous, thoughtless and frivolous. In the United States of America, they are positive, dogmatic and bold, and proclaim metempsychosis; whilst elsewhere, especially in Italy, they declare themselves to be pantheists, atheists, materialists. Among the Mormons . . . they approve and appraise polygamy." And the passage ends with the significant sentence: "If there is one thing on which the spirits agree, it is in abusing the Roman Catholic religion, of which they can only speak evil".

Now there is no question among Catholics, from purely theological grounds, as to the character of these communicating intelligences—in instances, that is, where it is established that a discarnate intelligence has been at work. And the three previous arguments, drawn simply from experience, seem most emphatically to corroborate the Catholic conclusion. It may further be added that no "teaching" purported to be given by the spirits, in the realm of theology, history or science, has ever surpassed, even if it has ever equalled, knowledge already enjoyed by men. If it were really a fact that the spirits of the holy dead, or even spirits

[1] "Hypnotism and Spiritism" (Chapman & Hall), pp. 197-8. Consult also "Sermons on Spiritualism," by Rev. A. V. Miller (Kegan Paul).

of average morality, were permitted by God to revisit the earth in order to instruct the human race, how extraordinarily easy it would be for them, by revealing to the inquirers some verifiable fact, hitherto unknown, to establish their character beyond a doubt. On the contrary it is found in innumerable instances that the intelligences are liars and deceivers, that teaching professedly from a world higher and more clear-sighted than our own, continually contradicts similar teaching given under the same auspices, and that the effect upon both mediums and inquirers is repeatedly found to be in the direction of physical, moral and mental ruin. It is of no use, as has been said, to advance theological arguments against convinced Spiritualists, though they may be of some avail with Christians; yet these further arguments, drawn from experience, point to precisely the same conclusion as that at which the Catholic Church arrived long ago—viz., that where such agencies are evidently at work, their origin can only be found in the adversary of man, and their object the ruin of the human race.

APPENDIX.

It is worth while, I think, to add here a few notes on some of the less important Nonconforming bodies in this country, not in any way exhaustive, but simply to indicate the ruling principle of each. The ramifications of Protestant thought are so numerous, and some of them so entirely unimportant, that it is impossible to include here even the names of all the sects that within the last two or three hundred years have come into existence.

1. The *Swedenborgians* (or "The New Church" or "The Church of the New Jerusalem") take their popular name from their 18th century founder, Emmanuel Swedenborg. Their system of belief, "evangelical" in the main, is yet enormously complex in its spiritual teaching, and is based upon the writings of their founder, to whom, it is claimed, the spiritual world was continuously open for above twenty years. His principal work is named "Arcana Cælestia" and runs into many volumes. It concerns itself chiefly with apocalyptic subjects, such as the Last Judgment, and the constitution of Heaven and Hell, and the inhabited planets. His teaching presents an extraordinary mixture of materialistic images and real spirituality; and its most interesting characteristic is his doctrine of "correspondences," by which is indicated an elaborate system of analogies between the physical and spiritual worlds. This system is worked out with great ingenuity in regard to the interpretation of the Scriptures. The Swedenborgians, therefore, cannot be

classed with the ordinary Nonconformist sects, since like the Irvingites they base all their position upon a professed "Private Revelation".

2. The *Plymouth Brethren*, founded about 1825, originally stood for a protest against the divisions of Protestantism, and sought to establish a platform on which persons of all denominations might meet. They have ended, however, by adding one more organized body to the already existing sects, and, indeed, are accused of a particularly narrow exclusiveness. Their system is "evangelical" in the main; but they are distinguished by a certain sternness of atmosphere and by an almost old-fashioned Puritanism. Their spirit, however, is one of great simplicity and devotionalism, and the standard of fervour amongst them is very high. Their principal danger probably lies in the direction of spiritual pride.

3. The *Moravians* are an exceedingly ancient sect, and trace their lineage back even behind the Protestant Reformation. They are governed by "bishops," and are distinguished for their missionary zeal in all countries. Their dogmatic system is that of "evangelical Christianity"; and they will mix, and even work, freely with members of all Protestant orthodox denominations.

4. The *Unitarians* are not, of course, Christian at all in the historic sense of the word, since they repudiate dogmatically the Divinity of Christ; yet it is probably true to say that their reverence as a whole for His Person, for His spiritual authority and His ethical example are very nearly if not quite equal to the attitude, in regard to the same points, of many professing Christians. It is their dogmatic repudiation of the doctrine of the Trinity, and their acceptance of Christian ethics and of Christ as the perfect Man, that constitute them as a sect from the dogmatic standpoint; but beyond these points Unitarians are free to form their

own opinions on other religious subjects. Practically, however, it may be said that "Supernaturalism" generally has little or no place amongst them. With regard to other matters, the Unitarians are distinguished for great intellectual activity, for several deep thinkers among their professed adherents, and in social life for great generosity and charity.

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